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Report on Global Anti-Semitism

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Executive Summary

I. Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism has plagued the world for centuries. Taken to its most far-reaching and violent extreme, the Holocaust, anti-Semitism resulted in the deaths of millions of Jews and the suffering of countless others. Subtler, less vile forms of anti-Semitism have disrupted lives, decimated religious communities, created social and political cleavages, and complicated relations between countries as well as the work of international organizations. For an increasingly interdependent world, anti-Semitism is an intolerable burden.

The increasing frequency and severity of anti-Semitic incidents since the start of the 21st century, particularly in Europe, has compelled the international community to focus on anti-Semitism with renewed vigor. Attacks on individual Jews and on Jewish properties occurred in the immediate post World War II period, but decreased over time and were primarily linked to vandalism and criminal activity. In recent years, incidents have been more targeted in nature with perpetrators appearing to have the specific intent to attack Jews and Judaism. These attacks have disrupted the sense of safety and well being of Jewish communities.

The definition of anti-Semitism has been the focus of innumerable discussions and studies. While there is no universally accepted definition, there is a generally clear understanding of what the term encompasses.

For the purposes of this report, anti-Semitism is considered to be hatred toward Jews—individually and as a group—that can be attributed to the Jewish religion and/or ethnicity. An important issue is the distinction between legitimate criticism of policies and practices of the State of Israel, and commentary that assumes an anti-Semitic character. 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.

Global anti-Semitism in recent years has had four main sources:

- Traditional anti-Jewish prejudice that has pervaded Europe and some countries in other parts of the world for centuries. This includes ultra-nationalists and others who assert that the Jewish community controls governments, the media, international business, and the financial world.
- Strong anti-Israel sentiment that crosses the line between objective criticism of Israeli policies and anti-Semitism.
- Anti-Jewish sentiment expressed by some in Europe's growing Muslim population, based on longstanding antipathy toward both Israel and Jews, as well as Muslim opposition to developments in Israel and the occupied territories, and more recently in Iraq.
- Criticism of both the United States and globalization that spills over to Israel, and to Jews in general who are identified with both.

II. Harassment, Vandalism and Physical Violence

Europe and Eurasia

Anti-Semitism in Europe increased significantly in recent years. At the same time it should be noted that many European countries have comprehensive reporting systems that record incidents more completely than is possible in other countries. Because of this significant difference in reporting systems, it is not possible to make direct comparisons between countries or geographic regions. Beginning in 2000, verbal attacks directed against Jews increased while incidents of vandalism (e.g. graffiti, fire bombings of Jewish schools, desecration of synagogues and cemeteries) surged. Physical assaults including beatings, stabbings and other violence against Jews in Europe increased markedly, in a number of cases resulting in serious injury and even death. Also troubling is a bias that spills over into anti-Semitism in some of the left-of-center press and among some intellectuals.

The disturbing rise of anti-Semitic intimidation and incidents is widespread throughout Europe, although with significant variations in the number of cases and the accuracy of reporting. European governments in most countries now view anti-Semitism as a serious problem for their societies and demonstrate a greater willingness to address the issue. The Vienna-based European Union Monitoring Center (EUMC), for 2002 and 2003, identified France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and The Netherlands as EU member countries with notable increases in incidents. As these nations keep reliable and comprehensive statistics on anti-Semitic acts, and are engaged in combating anti-Semitism, their data was readily available to the EUMC. Governments and leading public figures condemned the violence, passed new legislation, and mounted positive law enforcement and educational efforts.

In Western Europe, traditional far-right groups still account for a significant proportion of the attacks against Jews and Jewish properties; disadvantaged and disaffected Muslim youths increasingly were responsible for most of the other incidents. This trend appears likely to persist as the number of Muslims in Europe continues to grow while their level of education and economic prospects remain limited.

In Eastern Europe, with a much smaller Muslim population, skinheads and others members of the radical political fringe were responsible for most anti-Semitic incidents. Anti-Semitism remained a serious problem in Russia and Belarus, and elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, with most incidents carried out by ultra-nationalist and other far-right elements. The stereotype of Jews as manipulators of the global economy continues to provide fertile ground for anti-Semitic aggression.

Holocaust and tolerance education as well as teacher training provide a potential long-term solution to anti-Semitism; however, the problem is still rapidly outpacing the solution. At the end of 2003, and continuing into this year, some Jews, especially in Europe, faced the dilemma either of hiding their identity or facing harassment and sometimes even serious bodily injury and death. The heavy psychological toll in this increasingly difficult environment should not be overlooked or underestimated.

Middle East

Jews left the countries of the Middle East and North Africa in large numbers near the mid-point of the last century as their situation became increasingly precarious. This trend continues. Today few remain, and few incidents involving the remaining members of the Jewish community have been reported. Nonetheless, Syria condoned and, in some cases, even supported through radio, television programming, news articles, and other mass media the export of a virulent domestic anti-Semitism. The official and state-supported media's anti-Zionist propaganda frequently adopts the terminology and symbols of the Holocaust to demonize Israel and its leaders. This rhetoric often crosses the line separating the legitimate criticism of Israel and its policies to become anti-Semitic vilification posing as legitimate political commentary. At the same time, Holocaust denial and Holocaust minimization efforts find increasingly overt acceptance as sanctioned historical discourse in a number of Middle Eastern countries.

Other Regions

The problem of anti-Semitism is not only significant in Europe and in the Middle East, but there are also worrying expressions of it elsewhere. For example, in Pakistan, a country without a Jewish community, anti-Semitic sentiment fanned by anti-Semitic articles in the press is widespread. This reflects the more recent phenomenon of anti-Semitism appearing in countries where historically or currently there are few or even no Jews.

Elsewhere, in Australia, the level of intimidation and attacks against Jews and Jewish property and anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic rhetoric decreased somewhat over the past year. This year, New Zealand experienced several desecrations of Jewish tombstones and other incidents. In the Americas, in addition to manifestations of anti-Semitism in the United States, Canada experienced a significant increase in attacks against Jews and Jewish property. There were notable anti-Semitic incidents in Argentina and isolated incidents in a number of other Latin American countries.

III. Media

The proliferation of media outlets (television, radio, print media and the internet) has vastly increased the opportunity for purveyors of anti-Semitic material to spread their propaganda unhindered. Anti-hate laws provide some protection, but freedom of expression safeguards in many western countries limited the preventive measures that governments could take. Satellite television programming easily shifts from one provider to another and Internet offerings cross international borders with few or no impediments.

In June, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) organized a separate meeting in Paris dealing with intolerance on the Internet, and subsequently approved a decision on "Promoting Tolerance and Media Freedom on the Internet." The decision is prescriptive in nature and carefully caveated to avoid conflict with the varied legal systems within the countries of the OSCE. It calls upon Participating States to investigate and fully prosecute criminal threats of violence based on anti-Semitic and other intolerance on the Internet, as well as to establish programs to educate children about hate speech and other forms of bias.

Critics of Israel frequently use anti-Semitic cartoons depicting anti-Jewish images and caricatures to attack the State of Israel and its policies, as well as Jewish communities and others who support Israel. These media attacks can lack any pretext of balance or even factual basis and focus on the demonization of Israel. The United States is frequently included as a target of such attacks, which often assert that U.S. foreign policy is made in Israel or that Jews control the media and financial markets in the United States and the rest of the world. During the 2004 United States presidential campaign, the Arab press ran numerous cartoons closely identifying both of the major American political parties with Israel and with Israeli Prime Minister Sharon.

"The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a text debunked many years ago as a fraud perpetrated by Czarist intelligence agents, continued to appear in the Middle East media, not as a hoax, but as established fact. Government-sponsored television in Syria ran lengthy serials based on the Protocols. The presentations emphasized blood libel and the alleged control by the Jewish community of international finance. The clear purpose of the programs was to incite hatred of Jews and of Israel. Copies of the Protocols and other similar anti-Semitic forgeries were readily available in Middle Eastern countries, former Soviet republics and elsewhere. Similarly, allegations that Jews were behind the 9/11 attacks were widely disseminated.

In November 2004, Al-Manar, the Lebanon-based television network controlled by Hizballah featuring blatantly anti-Semitic material, obtained a limited 1-year satellite broadcast license from the French authorities. This was revoked shortly thereafter due to Al-Manar's continued transmission of anti-Semitic material. Al-Manar is now off the air in France. Other Middle East networks with questionable content, such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, maintain their French broadcast licenses.

IV. Actions by Governments

In Europe and other geographic regions, many governments became increasingly aware of the threat presented by anti-Semitism and spoke out against it. Some took effective measures to combat it with several countries, including France, Belgium, and Germany, now providing enhanced protection for members of the Jewish community and Jewish properties.

For the most part, the police response to anti-Semitic incidents was uneven. Most law enforcement officials are not specifically trained to deal with hate crimes, particularly anti-Semitic hate crimes. Police sometimes dismissed such crimes as hooliganism or petty crime, rather than attacks against Jews because of their ethnicity or religion, or because the assailants identified the victims with the actions of the State of Israel.

In countries where anti-Semitism is a serious problem, specialized training for police and members of the judiciary remains a pressing need. Many nations still do not have hate crime laws that address anti-Semitic and other intolerance-related crimes. In some instances where such laws already exist, stronger enforcement is needed.

V. Multilateral Action

Anti-Semitism is a global problem that requires a coordinated multinational approach. Thus far, the most effective vehicle for international cooperation has been the OSCE, comprised of 55 participating states from Europe, Eurasia and North America plus Mediterranean and Asian partners for cooperation. The OSCE organized two groundbreaking conferences on anti-Semitism--in June 2003, in Vienna and in April 2004, in Berlin. These were the first international conferences to focus high-level political attention solely on the problem of anti-Semitism. The Vienna Conference identified anti-Semitism as a human rights issue.

OSCE Foreign Ministers gave further high-level political acknowledgment to the seriousness of anti-Semitism at their December 2003 meeting in Maastricht. There they took the formal decision to spotlight the need to combat anti-Semitism by

deciding to task the OSCE's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to serve as a collection point for hate crimes information. ODIHR is now working with OSCE member states to collect information on hate crimes legislation and to promote "best practices" in the areas of law enforcement, combating hate crimes, and education. ODIHR established a Program on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination and now has an advisor to deal exclusively with the issue.

At their December 2004 meeting in Sofia, OSCE Foreign Ministers welcomed the Chair-in-Office's decision to appoint three special representatives for tolerance issues, including a special representative for anti-Semitism, to work with member states on implementing specific commitments to fight anti-Semitism. In addition, the Foreign Ministers accepted the Spanish Government's offer to host a third anti-Semitism conference in June 2005 in Cordoba.

The United Nations also took important measures in the fight against anti-Semitism. One was a June 2004 seminar on anti-Semitism hosted by Secretary General Kofi Annan. Another measure was a resolution of the United Nations Third Committee in November 2004, which called for the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance, explicitly including anti-Semitism.

Education remains a potentially potent antidote for anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. Following the first Stockholm Conference in 1998, convoked out of concern for the decreasing level of knowledge of the Holocaust particularly among the younger generation, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States decided to address the issue collaboratively. The Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF) emerged from this initial effort.

Today the ITF, an informal international organization operating on the basis of consensus, and without a bureaucracy, consists of 20 countries. ITF member states agree to commit themselves to the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust and to its implementation. Current members of the ITF include Argentina, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition, four other countries (Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Slovakia) maintain a liaison relationship with the ITF.

VI. U.S. Government Actions to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism

The U.S. Government is committed to monitoring and combating anti-Semitism throughout the world as an important human rights and religious freedom issue. As President Bush said when he signed the Global Anti-Semitism Review Act on October 16, 2004, "Defending freedom also means disrupting the evil of anti-Semitism."

Annually, the U.S. Department of State publishes the International Religious Freedom Report and the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. Both detail incidents and trends of anti-Semitism worldwide. The State Department's instructions to U.S. Embassies for the 2004 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices explicitly required them to describe acts of violence against Jews and Jewish properties, as well as actions governments are taking to prevent this form of bigotry and prejudice.

In multilateral fora, the Department of State called for recognition of the rise of anti-Semitism and the development of specific measures to address it. The Department played a leading role in reaching agreement in the OSCE to hold the two conferences on combating anti-Semitism noted above in Section V. Former New York City Mayors Rudolph Giuliani and Edward Koch led the United States delegations to the conferences in Vienna and Berlin, respectively. Each brought a wealth of knowledge and experience in fostering respect for minorities in multicultural communities. Key NGOs worked productively with the Department to prepare for these conferences. In his address to the Berlin Conference, Secretary Powell said: "We must not permit anti-Semitic crimes to be shrugged off as inevitable side effects of inter-ethnic conflicts. Political disagreements do not justify physical assaults against Jews in our streets, the destruction of Jewish schools, or the desecration of synagogues and cemeteries. There is no justification for anti-Semitism." At the United Nations, the United States has supported resolutions condemning anti-Semitism both at the General Assembly and at the UN Commission on Human Rights.

An important lesson of the Holocaust is that bigotry and intolerance can lead to future atrocities and genocides if not addressed forcefully by governments and other sectors of society. The United States is committed to working bilaterally to promote efforts with other governments to arrest and roll back the increase in anti-Semitism. President Bush affirmed that commitment during his visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 2003, stating: "This site is a sobering reminder that when we find anti-Semitism, whether it be in Europe, in America or anywhere else, mankind must come together to fight such dark impulses."

U.S. Embassies implement this commitment by speaking out against anti-Semitic acts and hate crimes. Ambassadors and other embassy officers work with local Jewish communities to encourage prompt law enforcement action against hate crimes. In Turkey, the U.S. Embassy worked closely with the Jewish community following the November 2003 bombing of the Neve Shalom Synagogue. In the Middle East, our embassies have protested to host governments against practices that have allowed their institutions to promote anti-Semitism, such as the heavily watched television series *Rider Without a Horse* and

Diaspora that respectively promoted the canard of the blood libel, and "The Protocols of Elders of Zion." U.S. bilateral demarches were effective in specific instances, but more remains to be done to encourage national leaders to speak out forcefully against anti-Semitism and in support of respectful, tolerant societies.

Building on the success achieved to date, the Department of State is accelerating its efforts with its partners globally to improve both monitoring and combating anti-Semitism in three specific areas: education, legislation, and law enforcement. The Department will continue to promote the development of Holocaust education curricula and teacher training programs. A successful program in this area has been summer teacher training partially funded through U.S. Embassies in cooperation with the Association of American Holocaust Organizations (AAHO) and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). At the October 2004 OSCE Human Dimension Meeting, the United States and France hosted a seminar on methodologies for teaching the Holocaust in multicultural societies. The United States also supports the work of NGOs in promoting educational programs abroad, in part based on successful seminars in the United States that teach respect for individuals and minority groups. Additionally, the U.S. State Department has supported efforts to promote tolerance in the Saudi educational system including by sponsoring the travel of religious educators to the United States to examine interreligious education.

The roots of anti-Semitism run deep and the United States does not underestimate the difficulty of reversing the recent resurgence of this ancient scourge. The legislative and executive branches, together with NGOs, constitute an important partnership in continuing the vital effort to find creative ways to monitor, contain, and finally stop anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism in Europe and Eurasia

Anti-Semitism was a widely dispersed problem in the region, although the severity and scope of abuses varied significantly among individual countries. During the reporting period, the most serious incidents of anti-Semitism—beatings and other physical abuses—occurred in 12 countries. Verbal harassment was reported in 28 countries, while desecration of cemeteries and synagogues was reported in 30 countries. The recent rise in anti-Jewish acts and sentiments in Western Europe was often influenced by Middle Eastern events or conflated with anti-Israeli views.

In 16 countries in the Europe and Eurasia region, there were few or no reported anti-Semitic incidents in recent years. This report is not intended as a comprehensive description of all incidents, but focuses on illustrative or particularly egregious cases. In the European context, the number of incidents reported in some countries reflects not only the depth of the problem, but also the thorough reporting on anti-Semitism by active civil societies, religious representatives, and governments themselves. As a result, there is sometimes an imbalance in the scope of reporting in the country narratives below.

Government responses have varied as well. Many European governments effectively prosecute those who perpetrate or incite anti-Semitic attacks or harassment, while others include officials who themselves make anti-Semitic statements or discriminate against Jews. Many European leaders have condemned anti-Semitism and called for tolerance, and several countries have joined the Council of Europe in declaring a Holocaust Memorial Day. In a June 2003 anti-Semitism conference, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) called on member states to reaffirm their commitments to condemn racial and ethnic hatred, including anti-Semitism, and to undertake effective follow-up plans of action to demonstrate these commitments in practice. In response, some countries have already implemented action plans.

Armenia

The Jewish community reported several incidents of verbal harassment during the reporting period. The director of ALM TV frequently made anti-Semitic remarks on the air, and the Union of Armenian Aryans, a small, ultranationalist group, called for the country to be "purified" of Jews and Yezidis.

On September 17, offices of the Jewish community in Yerevan received a message that vandals had damaged the local memorial to the victims of the Holocaust. Several photographs of the memorial were taken and the vandalism was immediately reported to the local police, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the government-owned television channel. A television crew arrived at the site together with an official from the Jewish community in Yerevan and to their surprise discovered that the memorial had been wiped clean, apparently by the park guard.

In May, Jewish groups complained to several government authorities about the distribution and importation of hate literature. Each government agency they contacted responded that the literature was in apparent violation of the "Law on Distributing Literature Inflaming National Hatred" and suggested they press formal charges with the Prosecutor General's office. Jewish leaders have not yet decided whether to press charges.

Austria

The Austrian NGO Forum gegen Antisemitismus (the Forum against Anti-Semitism, FGA) reported five physical attacks during the reporting period and eight in 2003. On July 30, 2003, according to the Coordination Forum, several unidentified persons beat an Orthodox Jew. The man was attacked from behind and beaten with belts. The assailants fled the scene and have not been arrested or identified. The victim was hospitalized suffering from bruises but was fully conscious. In a separate incident, an unknown assailant attacked two Orthodox Jews, one of whom was injured. In another incident, skinheads attacked the vice-director of a Jewish school in Vienna with a beer bottle, leaving the victim with injuries.

FGA also recorded 122 anti-Semitic incidents in the first 11 months of the year and 134 in 2003. The incidents included name-calling, graffiti/defacement, threatening letters, anti-Semitic Internet postings, property damage, vilifying letters and telephone calls, and physical attacks. The European Union's Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia declared that anti-Semitism in the country is characterized by diffuse and traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes rather than by acts of physical aggression.

On May 24, the Coordination Forum reported that a letter with anti-Semitic and xenophobic contents was received at the Jewish Community Building in Vienna.

On June 1, in Villach, according to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), vandals smashed a memorial honoring Holocaust victims in southern Austria. The memorial consisted of 17 glass plates engraved with the names of 108 local Holocaust victims. Vandals previously damaged the memorial in March 2003.

On October 24, the Coordination Forum reported that anti-Semitic comments were made at a neo-Nazi convention in the Province of Klagenfurt. Local authorities are examining whether holding the convention was a violation of the law.

On November 25, 2003, according to the Coordination Forum, an anonymous telephone call was received at the Jewish school in Vienna; the caller said: "There is a bomb in the school." He repeated the announcement and hung up. The school was evacuated and police conducted a search of the premises, but found nothing.

The law prohibits any racially motivated or anti-Semitic propaganda, and as a result, anti-Jewish propaganda does not exist in government publications. Nongovernmental media that seek to promote anti-Semitism cannot do so openly, but attempt to use veiled language that is nevertheless clearly understood by most citizens. Such groups are under close observation by the Government (especially the Bureau for Protection of the Constitution) and by private anti-discrimination groups. The Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance (DOEW) monitors the activities and publications of extreme right-wing groups and considers the following to contain revisionist and extremist viewpoints: Aula, Kommentare zur Zeitgeschichte, Arbeitsgemeinschaft fuer demokratische Politik (AFP), Huttenbriefe-Deutsches Kulturwerk Europaeischen Geistes (DKEG)/Deutsche Kulturgemeinschaft (DKG), Die Kameradschaft (Kameradschaft IV (K IV)), Fakten (published by "Die Kritischen Demokraten"), Der Eckart (Oesterreichische Landsmannschaft (OELM)), PNO-Nachrichten (Partei Neue Ordnung (PNO)), Top Secret – Phoenix, Die Umwelt, and Halt.

The 1947 Law Against Neo-Nazi Activity ("Verbotsgesetz") prohibits any form of neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism and any type of activity in the spirit of National Socialism. In particular, it bans National Socialist or neo-Nazi organizations, and prohibits incitement to neo-Nazi activity, as well as the glorification or praise of National Socialist ideology. It also prohibits public denial, belittlement, approval, or justification of National Socialist crimes, including the Holocaust. The Criminal Code prohibits public incitement to hostile acts, insult, or contempt against a church or religious society, or public incitement against a group based on race, nationality, or ethnicity, if that incitement could pose a danger to the public order. The Government strictly enforces its anti-neo-Nazi legislation and provides police protection for Jewish community institutions. During the reporting period, the country implemented the EU anti-discrimination guidelines.

The Ministry of the Interior's Internet hotline for reporting National Socialist activity received 140 reports of right-wing extremist activity, particularly in connection with the Internet.

The FGA reported that cooperation with the police and federal and regional authorities is very good. The FGA also stated that leading newspapers have been very responsive to requests to remove anti-Semitic postings on their online forum pages.

The Government recognized the Jewish faith community as one of 13 religious societies under an 1874 law. This had wide-ranging implications, such as providing the authority to participate in the mandatory church contributions program, to provide religious instruction in public schools, and to bring religious workers into the country to act as ministers, missionaries, or teachers. The Government also provided financial support to religious teachers affiliated with religious societies at both public and private schools.

Holocaust education was generally taught as part of history instruction, but also was featured in other subjects under the

heading "political education (civics)." Religious education classes were another forum for teaching the tenets of different religions and overall tolerance.

Special teacher training seminars were available on the subject of Holocaust education. The Education Ministry also ran a program through which Holocaust survivors talked to school classes about National Socialism and the Holocaust.

One example of a large-scale Holocaust education project was the "Letters to the Stars" in 2003, in which more than 15,000 students participated. Students chose a Holocaust victim who had lived in their neighborhood, did research on the person's life, and then wrote a letter to that victim. The letters were released on balloons during a ceremony on May 5.

Azerbaijan

The Mountain Jewish Community has resided in the country for 2,700 years; the Ashkenazi Jews have been present for more than 100 years.

Cases of prejudice and discrimination against Jews in the country were very limited, and in the few instances of anti-Semitic activity the Government has been quick to respond. There was only one reported incident during the period covered by this report. In April, the Lubavitch community received an anonymous letter containing threats during the observance of Passover. The police and military responded by blocking and securing Jewish places of worship to ensure the peaceful observance of the Passover holiday. The subsequent investigation revealed that a member of a small radical Islamic group wrote the letter, resulting in his conviction and imprisonment.

The Government does not condone or tolerate persecution of Jews by any party. No laws specifically address anti-Semitism.

Belarus

According to the Union of Councils for Jews in the Former Soviet Union (UCSJ), in 2003 memorials in Minsk and Lida commemorating victims of genocide were vandalized. During the reporting period, vandalism at Jewish cemeteries occurred in Bobruisk and Tchernov and at a Holocaust memorial in Brest. The local authorities refused to react to these incidents. The Prosecutor's office and the Committee for State Security (KGB) did nothing to investigate groups of skinheads and Russian National Unity (RNE), which functioned openly in Minsk, Grodno, Gomel, Vitebsk, and Polotsk. The RNE was banned in the country.

According to Jewish leaders, cases of vandalism decreased during the reporting period. Authorities initiated investigations, but in the past 15 years no vandals have been fined or jailed. The police failed to prosecute suspects to the fullest extent of the law. The Government restored monuments and memorials that were vandalized. The Government also allowed the erection of a memorial to Jews killed by Soviet security forces at Kurapaty.

On August 18, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs notified the local chapter of the UCSJ that it would not be reregistered, because the chapter submitted some documents late. The UCSJ is one of the primary Jewish human rights organizations in the country and previously worked with the Ministry of Education to provide material on the Holocaust.

Despite a May 2003 order by the Prosecutor General and the Ministry of Information to terminate distribution of the anti-Semitic and xenophobic newspaper *Russki Vestnik*, distribution of the newspaper resumed in February through the government-distribution agency *Belzoyuzprechat*. Sales of similar literature continued throughout the year in government-owned buildings, in stores, and at events affiliated with the Belarusian Orthodox Church (BOC). Anti-Semitic and Russian ultranationalistic literature continued to be sold at *Pravoslavnyaya Kniga* (Orthodox Bookstore), a store operated by Orthodox Initiative that sells Orthodox literature and religious paraphernalia. The head of the BOC, Metropolitan Filaret, promised to stop such sales; however, no action has been taken.

In January, the RNE distributed anti-Semitic leaflets in Gomel, which stated: "The Jews are trying to destroy Christianity," "Now hostile activities against the Jews will begin," "The Jews are the forces of evil," and "The fighters against God must be exterminated." In addition, the letters RNE were sprayed on the walls of the Jewish Community building in Gomel. No suspects were arrested.

There were reports of anti-Semitic statements made by public officials. In September 2003, Sergei Kostyan, Deputy Chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the Lower House of Parliament, rejected criticism regarding the installation of a gas pipeline near a Jewish cemetery in Maozr. Kostyan accused Jews of sowing "ethnic discord." During an October press conference, Information Minister Vladimir Rusakevich said the country should live with Russia like brothers, but to bargain with

Russia "like a Yid."

The Committee of Religious and Nationalities Affairs of the Council of Ministers (CRNA) reported that it regularly responded to all public expressions of xenophobia by notifying the government agencies responsible for pursuing legal action against the perpetrators; however, no such legal actions were observed during the period covered by this report.

Belgium

In November, the quasi-governmental Anti-Racism Center (Center for Equal Opportunity and the Struggle against Racism and Other Forms of Discrimination) reported an increase in anti-Semitism in recent years. The Center reported that the annual number of complaints rose to 30 between 2000 and 2003; prior to 1999, an average of 4 anti-Semitic incidents were registered per year. There were 40 complaints filed in the first 11 months of the year. The most serious incident was the stabbing of a Jewish youth in Antwerp. Most complaints concerned anti-Semitism in the media, on the Internet, graffiti, and verbal abuse. An Anti-Racism Center spokesperson pointed out that the increase in the number of incidents is partially due to increased reporting resulting from greater public awareness.

On January 28, during an indoor Belgium-Israel soccer match in the city of Hasselt, spectators with Hamas and Hizballah banners heckled the Israelis and shouted anti-Semitic slogans, some in Arabic. The city of Hasselt, the Anti-Racism Center, and a local Jewish organization filed a criminal complaint over the incident a few days later, which the police continued to pursue actively. No arrests were made during the reporting period. In February, a group of students at a Jewish school in Brussels were assaulted by youths from the neighborhood, which is inhabited primarily by Muslim immigrants.

In late June, there were several incidents of physical attacks on Jewish citizens. These incidents were prominently covered in the national media. On June 24, a number of allegedly North African youths assaulted four Jewish students as they departed their Jewish school in an Antwerp suburb; one fleeing student was stabbed and seriously injured. Jewish students at the school previously had been subjected to verbal insult and harassment from these youths. On June 26, three Jewish students from the same school were harassed by four youths in a car. One fired what is believed to be a toy gun at the students before driving away; there were no injuries. Later that evening, elsewhere in the Antwerp suburbs, a 13-year-old Jewish boy was beaten by three youths. An 11-year-old Moroccan and two Belgians, ages 8 and 16, were arrested and charged with racially motivated assault and battery by a court for youthful offenders; they were required to apologize to the victim and pay damages. Also that evening, several immigrant youths reportedly kicked a Jewish youth repeatedly on the main street of Antwerp, before escaping.

On October 30, at a youth soccer match involving Maccabi Soccer Club, an Antwerp-based team composed mainly of Jewish players, members of the opposite team shouted "Heil Hitler" and other abusive language. The referee reported the incident in writing to the Belgian Soccer Federation. On November 18, the Federation suspended the offending team for a year and fined it \$335 (250 euro), a considerable sum for an amateur club. The Anti-Racism Center indicated that prosecution was a possibility.

The Jewish community was increasingly concerned about anti-Semitism. Community representatives expressed concern that criticism of Israel, particularly from the left, was increasingly being transferred to the Jewish community. Senior representatives of the Muslim community have vocally condemned anti-Semitic acts and have participated in events organized by the Jewish community.

There continued to be a few cases of anti-Semitic speech generated from extreme right, neo-Nazi groups. These were pursued by the Anti-Racism Center, which won a conviction in September 2003 against two Holocaust deniers, such denial being illegal in the country; the two were sentenced to a year in prison, a \$670 (500 euro) fine, and the costs of the trial.

The politically resurgent far right has not only renounced anti-Semitism, but as part of an effort to appeal for Jewish community votes in Antwerp, became a strong supporter of the Jewish community and of stronger Belgian-Israeli relations.

Anti-Semitic acts or speech are illegal. Several lawsuits were filed by government entities or by the Anti-Racism Center, and there already were a few cases of courts issuing guilty verdicts. The Government so far has had limited success in apprehending and convicting (partly as a result of the very slow pace of the judicial processes) perpetrators of anti-Semitic acts. In one example of strong government enforcement responsiveness, the police rapidly deployed a heavily armed unit to a Jewish school in reaction to a possible threat.

The Government investigated web sites containing anti-Semitic language with the intent of filing cases under antiracism legislation.

The Government continued to move forward with its action plan against anti-Semitism, which was approved by the Council of Ministers in July. In response to the anti-Semitic incidents of the past year, protection for the Jewish community and its institutions was strengthened. Ministerial changes over the summer may have slowed implementation, but the commitment remained firm and effort continued.

The Minister of Social Integration convoked a working group that included the Ministers of Justice and Interior, enforcement agencies, the Anti-Racism Center, and representatives of the Jewish community. In May, she also mandated the compilation of research on the problem and perceptions of it. Promotion of tolerance education is a major element of the Government's action plan against anti-Semitism.

Government officials at all levels, including the Prime Minister, promptly condemned anti-Semitic incidents and remained in close touch with the Jewish community. On June 26, the federal Minister of Justice announced that she would require investigating magistrates to prosecute those engaged in anti-Semitic acts, whether verbal, physical, or on the Internet. On June 28, at a demonstration to protest growing anti-Semitism, the mayor of Antwerp promised the city's Jewish community that the police would make the problem their highest priority. On June 29, the federal Minister of Interior announced increased police protection at places such as schools and synagogues and said that the federal government would investigate other measures. On June 30, Prime Minister Verhofstadt met Jewish community leaders, expressed the Government's concern regarding recent attacks, and noted the increased police protection. The following day, he told Parliament that such incidents were attacks on the country's fundamental values and institutions and would not be tolerated. The judicial system has been tasked with giving such attacks full priority. For example, in Brussels, 61 investigations and an indictment were underway, with similar efforts in Antwerp. The Prime Minister also pledged to urge the regions to intensify educational efforts to counter anti-Semitism and racism. Jewish community leaders have indicated to foreign diplomatic observers that they were reassured by government efforts, but they remained apprehensive regarding new outbreaks of violence.

Investigations revealed that some recent attacks on Jews had criminal or personal, not anti-Semitic origins.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

The small Jewish community membership was estimated to be between 500 and 1000 persons. The community maintained a special place in society by virtue of its long history of coexistence with other religious communities, and its active role in mediating among those communities. However, isolated acts of vandalism were reported. For example, in September, several tombstones in the Jewish cemetery in Sarajevo were vandalized. Jewish leaders state that there was a growing tendency in the country to mix anti-Israeli sentiment with acts of anti-Semitism, as the general public and media often fail to distinguish between criticism of Israeli policy and anti-Semitic rhetoric. Following the terrorist attack against a mosque in Turkey during the reporting period, the Jewish community was quickly granted police security at its synagogues and no incidents were reported.

Bulgaria

The Jewish population is estimated to total 3,000 persons. The Bulgarian Helsinki Committee (BHC), in cooperation with Shalom, the primary Jewish organization in the country, conducted a survey of all print media from December 2002 through December 2003 for instances of anti-Semitic and anti-Israeli articles and comments. The project examined 2,162 Jewish/Israeli-related articles and found only around 7 percent to be anti-Semitic, anti-Israeli, or pro-extremist; of these, over 50 percent were anti-Israeli. Of these negative articles, 74 percent were concentrated in two publications (52 percent in Monitor and 22 percent in Segal), which combined make up a small segment of the national mass media; the articles in Segal tended to be exclusively critical of Israel and its policies.

Croatia

The Croatian Jewish community has approximately 2,000 members and had generally good relations with the police and other governmental institutions. In June, a member of the municipal council in Dubrovnik commented on a potential Jewish hotel investor that when, "choosing between Serbs and Jews, Jews were still a greater evil." Local authorities and the Government condemned the comments; the local branch of the ruling party took no disciplinary action against its member.

The Croatia Working Group of the ITF focused on the implementation of Holocaust-related educational programs, dissemination of academic knowledge on the Holocaust, and preservation of the memory of the victims.

Czech Republic

A small, but persistent and fairly well organized, extreme right-wing movement with anti-Semitic views exists in the country.

In August, unknown vandals toppled approximately 80 tombstones at a Jewish cemetery in the eastern town of Hranice. In October, vandals damaged a memorial to victims of the Holocaust for the second time since it was erected in July in the town of Bohumin. According to local Jewish leader, the memorial was covered in brown paint. The memorial was built on the site of a former synagogue, which was destroyed by fire during World War II. In November, a swastika was daubed on a wall of the ancient Altneu Synagogue in Prague, and two youths were arrested in a pub in Sumerk after they shouted "Heil Hitler." They continued giving the Nazi salute even after police removed them from the pub.

In October and November 2003, unknown vandals damaged gravestones at Jewish cemeteries in eastern Bohemia. In November 2003, police in the northern Bohemian town of Krupka apprehended two youths painting Nazi symbols on a monument to the victims of a World War II death march.

On January 30, police arrested Denis Gerasimov, member of the Russian Neo-Nazi band Kolovkrat, and charged him with supporting and propagating a movement aimed at suppressing human rights. Gerasimov was detained at Prague's Ruzyně International Airport after police found large amounts of Nazi propaganda in his luggage. His case was pending at year's end.

The Ministry of Interior continued its efforts to counter the neo-Nazis, which included monitoring their activities, close cooperation with police units in neighboring countries, and concentrated efforts to shut down unauthorized concerts and gatherings of neo-Nazi groups.

Denmark

From January through June, there were five incidents of anti-Semitic vandalism, primarily graffiti, and one incident of an anti-Semitic mailing, which the Government criticized and investigated. Reported incidents also involved theft and racist Internet and written messages. Minority group members were sometimes the perpetrators of the incidents. The Government effectively investigated and dealt with cases of racially motivated violence.

The law prohibits publicly disseminated statements that threaten, insult, or degrade persons based on their religion. In November 2003, the Government launched an action plan to Promote Equal Treatment and Diversity and Combat Racism (Equal Treatment Plan). Although not exclusively aimed at anti-Semitism, the goal of the Equal Treatment Plan was to ensure protection for all citizens, regardless of their beliefs. Under the Equal Treatment Plan, the Government allocated \$416,000 (2.5 million DKK) for education and integration programs to combat religious discrimination.

Estonia

During the reporting period, a number of World War II veterans groups held commemorations for Estonians who fought in German uniform (including that of the Waffen SS) against the Soviet occupation. In one case a monument was erected depicting a soldier in Waffen SS uniform, absent Nazi insignia. The Government had the monument removed in September. There were reports that participants made anti-Semitic remarks in response to international criticism of these events. The commemorations generated considerable public commentary on how Estonia could appropriately honor its war dead. The Government subsequently tasked the Ministry of Population and Ethnic Affairs with creating a plan for an appropriate memorial, and a nonpartisan parliamentary commission has been established for that purpose.

In March, two persons were arrested in the northeastern town of Sillamae for painting anti-Semitic slogans and swastikas on the walls of a building. They were charged with incitement. On April 16, the rabbi of a synagogue in Tallinn found a swastika painted on the building.

In June 2003, three skinheads were sentenced to conditional imprisonment for activities that publicly incited hatred on the basis of national origin and race. They were convicted for having drawn swastikas and anti-Semitic inscriptions on buildings in Sillamae. There are two pending investigations related to the posting of anti-Semitic remarks on the Internet.

The country introduced an annual Holocaust and Other Crimes against Humanity Memorial Day in January 2003. Members of the parliament and ambassadors attended the ceremony marking the first observation of this day in Tallinn.

Following a July meeting with the President of the Jewish Community of Estonia, the Prime Minister said that the Government "was determined to condemn any signs of anti-Semitism and racism." He also said that the Government needed to continue raising awareness of the country's recent history.

At the Berlin OSCE Anti-Semitism Conference in April, the Minister of Population and Ethnic Affairs said that government preparation of law enforcement officers would have to include sensitivity training so the country could more effectively act

against manifestations of intolerance, xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism.

Finland

There were a few reports of anti-Semitic activity, chiefly graffiti such as swastikas with anti-Semitic slogans being spray-painted in public locales. Support for the Palestinians was strong, and critiques of Israeli policy occasionally took on anti-Semitic features. The Helsingin Sanomat, the country's largest newspaper, ran a political cartoon in a magazine supplement that was interpreted by members of the Jewish community and others as anti-Semitic. The newspaper subsequently apologized.

The Government condemned the resurgence of anti-Semitism in Europe. In June, the Justice Ministry ruled that the distributor of an anti-Semitic book was liable under the country's "hate speech" provisions; the distributor was ordered to pay a fine and the book was removed from circulation. The Parliament and a local NGO cosponsored a conference in Helsinki on anti-Semitism, and officials played an active role in international conferences and fora on anti-Semitism. The Government sponsored a visit of a Holocaust survivor to the country to speak with schoolchildren about the Jewish experience during World War II.

France

The Government reports that there were 510 anti-Semitic incidents (both actions and threats) in the first 6 months of the year, as compared to 593 for all of 2003 and 932 for 2002. Interior Minister Dominique de Villepin announced in August that there were 160 attacks against persons or property in the first 7 months of 2004 versus 75 during the same period in 2003. More recently, Justice Minister Dominique Perben stated that there were 298 anti-Semitic acts between January 1 and August 20, of which 162 were attacks against property, 67 were assaults against individuals, and 69 were press violations. This compares, according to Perben, with 108 for all of 2003.

The National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (NCCHR) released an extensive analysis of anti-Semitic incidents reported by the police in 2003. Such incidents ranged from graffiti and desecration (256) and verbal or written harassment (166) to the diffusion of written tracts (31) and bomb threats (10). There were 21 persons injured in anti-Semitic attacks in 2003. Based on investigations of the attacks, the NCCHR stated its conclusions that disaffected French-North African youths were responsible for many of the incidents, which French officials linked to tensions in Israel and the Palestinian territories. A small number of incidents were also attributed to extreme-right and extreme-left organizations.

In its report on anti-Semitic attacks in 2003, the NCCHR focused on an increase in the proportion of anti-Semitic incidents that took place in schools. In 2003, 22 of 125 attacks (18 percent) and 73 of 463 threats (16 percent) occurred in schools; the report shows this to be the highest proportion of incidents in schools since 1997, the oldest data in the report.

On May 30, in Boulogne-Billancourt, a 17-year-old Jewish youth was attacked outside his home by a group of young men yelling anti-Semitic slogans. The youth is the son of a local rabbi.

In June, an individual shouting "Allah Akbar" stabbed a Jewish student and assaulted two other Jewish students in the city of Epinay-sur-Seine. This same person is believed to be responsible for similar knife attacks on five other victims, including those of Haitian and Algerian origin. A suspect, reportedly identified by several of the victims, was in custody at the end of the period covered by this report. The varied and random nature of the victims made the true motive of the attacks hard to discern.

In 2003, some Jewish groups were outraged when a court ordered that--in the case of two 11-year-old Muslim youths expelled for accusations of physical and verbal attacks against a Jewish student--the two students be readmitted to school, and also ordered the Government to reimburse the families \$1,340 (1,000 euro) each for court costs. The courts found that, while the behavior of the Muslim students merited action, the age of the students and the circumstances did not justify expulsion.

On March 23, in Toulon, a Jewish synagogue and community center was set on fire. According to media reports, the arsonist broke a window and threw a Molotov cocktail into the building. There was minor damage and no injuries.

On May 7, in Villier-le-Bel, a small explosive device was discovered outside a synagogue north of Paris. According to media reports, the bomb was in a bag with the writing "Boom anti-Jews" and a swastika. On May 14, an 18-year-old man was found guilty of putting the fake bombs on the grounds of the synagogue and was sentenced to 2 months in prison.

On October 29-30, close to 100 gravestones were desecrated at a Jewish cemetery in Brumath, just outside Strasbourg. The vandals painted swastikas and "SS" symbols on 92 Jewish gravestones.

In November 2003, Hizballah's Al-Manar satellite television channel broadcast an anti-Semitic, Egyptian pseudo-documentary called "Ash Shatat" (The Diaspora). The Government and Jewish organizations strongly criticized Al-Manar for the blatant anti-Semitism of this series and for the incendiary intent of some of Al-Manar's news coverage. These complaints against Al-Manar prompted the Audio Visual Superior Council (CSA) to seek to cut off Al-Manar's dissemination via its France-based satellite operator, Eutelsat. France's highest appeals court for regulatory matters, the Conseil d'Etat, ruled in August that Al-Manar could continue satellite broadcasting pending application for a broadcast license from the CSA. The CSA then entered into negotiations with Al-Manar that resulted in the agreement and temporary license. The CSA signed a 1-year, limited license with Al-Manar on November 19 that included provisions banning anti-Semitic broadcasts, propaganda in favor of suicide bombings, and the diffusion of hate. The CSA's reversal of its decision to cut off Al-Manar was vigorously protested by Jewish organizations. Shortly thereafter, the CSA petitioned the Conseil d'Etat to ban the station based on anti-Semitic programming broadcast after Al-Manar signed the restricted license. On December 13, the Conseil d'Etat ordered Eutelsat to cease broadcasts of Al-Manar within 48 hours. Prime Minister Raffarin has called Al-Manar's anti-Semitic programming "incompatible with French values" and urged the issue of satellite broadcasts be taken up at the EU level. Authorities are similarly investigating Iranian-broadcast Al-Alam channel.

Government officials at the highest level vigorously and publicly condemned acts of anti-Semitism. In October, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs called comments by Radio France International editor Alain Menargues "unacceptable." In an interview publicizing his book on the West Bank security barrier, Menargues called Israel a "racist" state. Menargues was forced to resign as a result of his comments.

Of these anti-Semitic acts committed during the reporting period, the Minister of Justice reported that suspects have been identified in 59 of the cases, resulting in 46 cases going to court and 13 cases closed after the offender paid a fine or was found legally inculpable. Of the 2003 incidents, the Government reported that police had sufficient evidence to question 91 suspects, arrest 69 suspects, and bring to trial 43 suspects. In 2003, there were 7 convictions for anti-Semitic attacks committed that year and 15 convictions for attacks committed in 2002; punishments ranged from fines to 4 years' imprisonment.

Authorities condemned anti-Semitic attacks, maintained heightened security at Jewish institutions, investigated the attacks, made arrests, and pursued prosecutions. More than 13 mobile units, totaling more than 1,200 police officers, were assigned to those locales having the largest Jewish communities. Fixed or mobile police were present in the schools, particularly during the hours when children are entering or leaving school buildings. All of these measures were coordinated closely with leaders of the Jewish communities in the country, notably the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF). In addition, the Ministry of Interior has earmarked \$20.1 million (15 million euro) for additional security at Jewish sites.

In November 2003, after an arson attack destroyed a Jewish school in Gagny, President Chirac stated, "An attack on a Jew is an attack on France" and ordered the formation of an interministerial committee charged with leading an effort to combat anti-Semitism. Since its first meeting in December 2003, the committee has worked to improve government coordination in the fight against anti-Semitism, including the timely publication of statistics and reinforced efforts to prosecute attackers.

In June, the Government commissioned Jean-Cristophe Rufin, a doctor, writer, and president of the humanitarian association Action Against Hunger, to prepare an in-depth report on racism and anti-Semitism in the country. The Rufin Report, released in October, concluded that racism and anti-Semitism attacked the country's republican values and threatened democracy. The report identified the perpetrators of anti-Semitic acts as elements of the extreme right, Maghrebian (North African origin) youth, and "disaffected individuals" whose anti-Semitic obsessions prompt their attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions. The Rufin Report also warned against radical anti-Zionists who question Israel's right to exist. The report recommended that a law be created to punish those publicly equating Israel or Zionism with apartheid or Nazism. The report also recommended removing injunctions against incitement to racism and anti-Semitism from the press law and writing a new law, specific to those crimes. The current provisions in the press law are too cumbersome for prosecuting public hate speech and too lenient in their sanctions against private hate speech, it notes.

Many local and international Jewish organizations, as well as foreign governments, praised the Government for vigorous action in combating anti-Semitism; however, some groups asserted that the judicial system was lax in its sentencing of anti-Semitic offenders.

The Government took steps to combat intolerance, particularly among the youth. In March, the Government published an educational tool, intended to help public school teachers promote tolerance and combat anti-Semitism and racism; however, it is still too early to judge its efficacy. In August, Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoe sent letters to all Paris-area school principals calling for "debates on anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination" when classes resume in September. In addition, the Minister of Education called for a national debate in schools at the beginning of the academic year to highlight the need for tolerance and announced that 5,500 schools would receive copies of the film "Shoah" for use in classroom education. These actions

followed the creation of a National Commission to Combat anti-Semitism in schools in 2003.

The Government has taken other proactive steps to fight anti-Semitic attacks, including instructing police commissioners to create monitoring units in each department and announcing in June the creation of a department-level Council of Religions that will raise public awareness of increased racial and anti-sectarian incidents. In September, the Mayor of Paris launched a campaign to fight all forms of intolerance that included 1,200 municipal billboards and bulletins in major newspapers.

Germany

Approximately 87,500 persons are members of Jewish congregations and account for 0.1 percent of the population. According to press reports, the country's Jewish population is growing rapidly; more than 100,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union have come to the country since 1990, with smaller numbers arriving from other countries as well. Not all new arrivals join congregations, resulting in the discrepancy between population numbers and the number of congregation members.

While anti-Semitism based on religious doctrines and traditional anti-Jewish prejudices continued to exist, Jewish leaders, academics, and others believe that a newer, nontraditional form of anti-Semitism is emerging in the country. This form tends to promote anti-Semitism as part of its other stands against globalization, capitalism, Zionism, and foreigners. According to the 2003 report by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the total number of registered anti-Semitic crimes decreased to 1,199 (from 1,515 in 2002). However, among these, the number of violent crimes increased from 28 to 35, and the number of desecrations of Jewish cemeteries, synagogues, or memorials went up from 78 to 115.

On July 22, a 15-year-old boy in Hagen, along with two others, threatened synagogue visitors with a knife and made anti-Semitic remarks.

On July 31, a young man wearing a Star of David sticker was walking on a street in Pankow, a suburb of Berlin, when a right-wing extremist put a National Democratic Party (NPD) leaflet in his hand. After dropping the leaflet on the sidewalk, the rightist attempted to strangle the victim and throw him on the ground. The victim had minor injuries, and the police arrested the offender.

In August, the Zionist Organization of Frankfurt received an eyewitness report that four men harassed an English-speaking orthodox Jew in downtown Frankfurt. According to the report, the men shouted "they forgot to send your parents to the gas chamber" and jostled the individual until he fell to the ground. The men fled the scene immediately. Police refused to disclose the victim's identity or other information on the incident.

An ancient Jewish cemetery in Duesseldorf was desecrated in June. Forty-five gravestones were covered with swastikas, SS signs, and anti-Jewish slogans. Other Jewish cemeteries, including in Bochum, Nickenich, and Bausendorf, were vandalized during the reporting period. Police investigators were unable to identify the perpetrators.

On September 23, 350 people demonstrated in the district of Neunkirchen (Saarland) against the desecration of the Hermanstrasse Jewish cemetery earlier in the month. According to police, the desecration nearly destroyed the cemetery. Vandals have desecrated the Hermanstrasse graves on 10 occasions since 1971, including twice during the reporting period. The incident took place after significant electoral gains by the far-right party NPD in Neunkirchen (5.6 percent) and neighboring Voelklingen (9.7 percent) in Saarland's September 5 state elections.

During the reporting period, the extreme right wing "National Democratic Party" (NPD) organized two demonstrations in the city of Bochum under the motto "stop the construction of the synagogue – give the 4 million to the people!"

Jewish community leaders expressed disappointment in the leaders of other religious communities, as well as in some local and national politicians, for not speaking out more forcefully against anti-Semitism. In October 2003, Martin Hohmann, a Christian Democratic Union (CDU) Member of Parliament, publicly compared the actions of Jews during the Russian Revolution to those of the Nazis during the Holocaust. These remarks led to a criminal complaint alleging incitement and slander and to the opening of an inquiry. Hohmann was expelled from the CDU Bundestag Caucus in November 2003 and from the CDU Hesse state organization in July. Leading politicians from all major parties continued to assert that neo-Nazi groups posed a serious threat to public order and to call for continuing vigilance by law enforcement agencies. On the other hand, some observers blamed the actions in the Middle East for rising anti-Semitism.

Frankfurt's Jewish community harshly criticized anti-Semitism on the part of some Islamic representatives at the October Frankfurt Book Fair. Jewish representatives cited open displays of anti-Semitic texts such as the Saudi Arabian book "Terror and Zionist Thinking" (featuring a cover illustration of a person standing in a pool of blood with a skull and a Star of David).

The Aachen-based Islamist group, the Al Aqsa Association, which was banned by Federal Interior Minister Otto Schilly in 2002 due to its financial support of the terrorist organization Hamas, lodged an appeal against the ban at the Federal Administrative Court in August 2002. In July, the court decided to suspend the ban until conclusion of the proceedings. In a final decision on December 3, the Federal Administrative Court in Leipzig confirmed the ban of the Al Aqsa Association.

Nine members of the Kameradschaft Süd, a neo-Nazi gang from Southern Germany, were charged in an alleged 2003 plot to bomb the site of a planned Jewish community center in downtown Munich. The first of two trials started in October involving three teenage girls and two men. The public has been largely excluded from this trial in order to protect the defendant minors. The trial of the alleged ringleader, Martin Wiese, and three members of his inner leadership circle began in November.

Distribution of the propaganda of proscribed organizations, statements inciting racial hatred and endorsing Nazism, and denial of the Holocaust are illegal, and the authorities sought to block what they considered dangerous material on the Internet. In March, police nationwide raided over 300 apartments to search for and seize right-wing extremist CDs and other banned music products. The state of Lower Saxony took legal action against some of the growing number of neo-Nazi musical bands in the state, which called for violence or employed xenophobic or racist lyrics. In 2003, members of the Berlin neo-Nazi band "Landser" were convicted of forming a criminal organization and sentenced to terms ranging from 21 months probation to 3 years and 4 months in prison.

Officials estimated that there were more than 1,000 Internet sites with what they considered to be objectionable or dangerous right-wing extremist content. The Federal Court of Justice held that the country's laws against Nazi incitement might apply to individuals who post Nazi material on Internet sites available to users in the country, even if the site resides on a foreign server.

In April, the Government hosted a historic Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) conference on anti-Semitism. With strong support from the Government, the conference led to a declaration calling on OSCE member states to implement a set of concrete measures to combat anti-Semitism.

Authorities ran a variety of tolerance-education programs, many focusing on anti-Semitism and xenophobia. Government agencies cooperated with NGOs in the formulation and administration of these programs. These measures included promoting educational programs that not only fight anti-Semitism, but also remember the Holocaust and foster tolerance and respect for all religious groups; collecting and maintaining information of anti-Semitic incidents and other hate crimes; and compiling best practices. With active participation from the Muslim community, Hamburg has begun work on establishing interreligious education at public schools, labeled the "Hamburg Model."

Greece

Vandalism of Jewish monuments continued to be a problem during the reporting period; however, the Government condemned the acts. Jewish monuments in Ioannina were desecrated three times in 2003. The Holocaust memorial in Thessaloniki was desecrated in February 2003. Police have not found perpetrators. Anti-Semitic graffiti was painted, removed by authorities, and repainted in several places on the busy Athens-Corinth Highway. The extreme right-wing group "Golden Dawn" regularly paints anti-Semitic graffiti on bridges and other structures throughout Greece. Some schoolbooks still carry negative references to Roman Catholics, Jewish persons, and others. Bookstores in Northern Greece sold and displayed anti-Semitic literature including "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

The Wiesenthal Center issued a travel advisory in November 2003 warning Jewish visitors about "the failure of Greece to curb growing anti-Semitism;" however, local Jewish community leaders do not support the advisory. The National Tourist Organization continued to promote on its website Easter traditions such as the burning of an effigy of Judas on some islands, sometimes known locally as the "burning of the Jew," which propagate hatred and fanaticism against Jews. The Wiesenthal Center protested the revival of this tradition.

Anti-Semitism continued to exist, both in the mainstream and extremist press. The Wiesenthal Center and the ADL denounced the press for anti-Semitic articles and cartoons on several occasions, particularly after Israeli forces killed Hamas leader Sheik Yassin. The line between opposition to Israeli policies and attitudes toward Jews in general is often blurred, giving rise to anti-Semitic sentiment in the media and among the public.

The mainstream media often use the terms "genocide" and "Holocaust" to describe the situation in Israel and the West Bank/Gaza, drawing a parallel with Nazi Germany. The press and public often do not clearly distinguish between Israeli policies and Jews. The Jewish community leaders have condemned anti-Semitic broadcasts on small private television stations, but no charges have been brought against these largely unlicensed operators.

The renowned composer Mikis Theodorakis called Jews "the root of evil" in November 2003, and made strong anti-Semitic remarks during the reporting period. Government officials stated that Theodorakis' statements were directed against Israel and not against the Jewish people.

Populist Orthodox Rally (LAOS), a small, extreme right-wing party, supports virulent nationalism, anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobia. LAOS's leader, George Karatzaferis, won a seat in the European Parliament in June elections. Karatzaferis regularly attributes negative events involving Greece to international Jewish plots. He used the party-owned television station to denounce politicians with Jewish origins and to claim that Jews were behind the September 11 attacks.

The Government condemned all acts of vandalism. The Government provided 24-hour police protection to Jewish Community offices in Athens and other major cities. Negotiations between the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki and the Government to find acceptable recompense for the community's cemetery were ongoing.

The Constitution establishes the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ (Greek Orthodoxy) as the prevailing religion, but also provides for the rights of all citizens to practice the religion of their choice. Jews freely practice their religion, and Jewish organizations have not complained or requested additional legal protection.

Judaism is one of the three religious groups (the others are Greek Orthodox and Islam) considered to be "legal persons of public law." In practice, this beneficial distinction primarily means that Jewish organizations can own property as religious entities rather than as legal entities.

On January 15, the Parliament unanimously approved the declaration of January 27, the day Auschwitz was liberated, as Holocaust Remembrance Day. The following week, the country commemorated Holocaust Remembrance Day with events in Athens and Thessaloniki and the participation of Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel. In April, a commemorative stone was placed at the railway station from which Jews were deported to concentration camps.

In October, the Government participated in the organization of a seminar on "Teaching the Holocaust." Held under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, it addressed 150 educators and Athens University education majors. This teacher-training seminar aimed to introduce Holocaust education in primary and secondary schools.

A memorial to Greek-Jewish veterans of World War II was unveiled in October 2003 in Thessaloniki.

Hungary

The Jewish community stated that there were fewer acts of vandalism in Jewish cemeteries than in 2003, attributed most of the incidents to youths, and did not consider the incidents anti-Semitic.

On July 1, a Jewish cemetery in northern Hungary was vandalized. More than 90 gravestones were smashed just weeks after the local town council had renovated the cemetery to mark the 60th anniversary of the Holocaust.

Representatives of the Jewish community expressed concern over anti-Semitism in some media outlets, in society, and in coded political speech. For example, certain segments of an ongoing Sunday news magazine, Vasarnapi Ujsag, on Hungarian Public Radio were criticized for presenting guests who held anti-Semitic viewpoints. In October 2003, a weekly talk show, Ejjeli Menedek, reported on Holocaust denier David Irving, who made derogatory statements regarding Jewish persons. The show was subsequently cancelled. The weekly newspaper Magyar Demokrata published anti-Semitic articles and featured articles by authors who have denied the Holocaust.

Jewish Community Mazsihisz representatives requested the Ministry of Cultural Heritage to close a county museum exhibition highlighting the Arrow Cross and Hungarian nationalism during World War II. The exhibition was closed, and the materials were returned to their owners. During their visit to the country in April, the Chief Rabbi and the President of Israel spoke positively of the situation of the Jewish community in Hungary.

Local NGOs are attempting to get a court order stripping the neo-Nazi group "Blood and Honor" of its official registration. A new unregistered neo-Nazi group, "Hungarian Future," planned a public demonstration to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the fascist takeover of the country. Several groups have planned anti-fascist counter demonstrations for the same day and at the same locale. The police have found no legal grounds on which to ban the demonstration.

On April 5, hundreds of persons participated in the unveiling ceremony of a statue of Pal Teleki, the Prime Minister of Hungary

in the 1920s, who was the first in Europe to enact anti-Semitic legislation. The Minister of Culture, Istvan Hiller, cancelled plans for setting up the statue (in Budapest) in the wake of pressures from the Wiesenthal Center. The statue, which was to have been set up opposite the President's official residence in Budapest, was eventually built in the courtyard opposite the Catholic church in the town of Balatonbolgar on the shore of Lake Balaton.

The Government made strong efforts to combat anti-Semitism by clearly speaking out against the use of coded speech by right-wing extremists, and the Prime Minister himself publicly stated that Hungarians were also responsible for the Holocaust.

The 1997 changes to the hate speech law that were intended to resolve conflicting court decisions and make it easier to enforce and stiffen penalties for hate crimes committed on the basis of the victim's ethnicity, race, or nationality proved inadequate and often led to conflicting court decisions. In early 2003, the Office of the Prosecutor successfully prosecuted a member of the extremist Justice and Life Party for publishing an anti-Semitic article in a local newspaper. In November 2003, the Budapest Appeals Court acquitted a former Member of Parliament, who is a Calvinist pastor, of a charge of incitement to hatred. The conflicting court decisions prompted Parliament to pass a more restrictive law on hate speech, this time incorporating religious groups within its scope. Pressured from both the right and the left, President Madl referred it to the Constitutional Court for an advisory opinion in January. In May, the Constitutional Court ruled that the law is too vague and returned it to Parliament for refinement.

Iceland

Harassment of the Jewish community in the country was infrequent and not organized. The absence of anti-Semitism may have been due to the fact that the Jewish population was tiny and inconspicuous. Iceland had no synagogue, no Jewish community center, and no Jewish religious services available. The Jewish population had yet to organize formally and register as a religious community under applicable law. Anti-Semitism rarely figured in Icelandic news reports. The Government and NGOs had no programs to counter anti-Semitism.

One incident of harassment was reported in August. A Jewish visitor reported in an online news magazine that he and a friend had been harassed by a group of young teenagers who pointed at his yarmulke, gave a 'Heil Hitler' salute, and then briefly blocked the visitors' exit from a parking lot, intimidating them. An Icelandic daily newspaper picked up the story, sparking over 30 online comments from Iceland-based correspondents. Some of the comments were themselves anti-Semitic or xenophobic in tone and content.

The March 22 issue of Icelandic tabloid newspaper DV carried a cartoon that raised concerns in the small Jewish community. The drawing showed a flying saucer that had touched down next to Jerusalem's Western Wall. Two smiling aliens, anthropomorphized as swastikas, were disembarking and pointing. Their speech balloon contained nonsense signs. Facing them and bearing expressions of shock were two Orthodox Jews, with hats, tallis, black coats, and sidelocks. The cartoon's caption stated, "The 'Galactic Council' regarded the situation in the Middle East on the planet Earth as threatening to the stability of the solar system, viewed in the long term, and thus sent its best negotiators, Zorg and Xuri, to the scene for talks." The cartoonist seemed to be suggesting that the solution to the Middle East conflict would be to dispatch Nazis to Israel's capital.

Holocaust education was not required by the national curriculum. However, the Ministry of Education mandated that the subject be covered as part of mandatory history education. References to the Holocaust appeared in several textbooks that touch on Nazism and persecution against Jews and other minorities in 1930s and 1940s Germany and in the countries it occupied. According to staff of the state textbook producer, teachers were permitted to take the initiative for more in-depth teaching on the subject than the little that was offered in textbooks.

Ireland

During the reporting period, the Irish Times newspaper reported three instances of anti-Semitism in the country. One incident included a swastika painted on the Irish Jewish Museum in Dublin, while the other incidents involved vandalism at a Jewish cemetery and synagogue. A 2003 study by the European Commission's European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia described the country as having "relatively little reported in the way of a problem with anti-Semitism." In fact, the study categorized all the 2003 cases as "abusive behavior" (threatening letters or phone calls), totaling only 16. Recent evidence shows that these acts may be interrelated with the emergence of a racist group calling itself Irish Nationalist, which has expressed anti-British and anti-Israeli views. In spite of these developments, the country has very little evidence of anti-Semitism.

The most recent study, published by the Government's National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), showed increases in "cases of abuse or discrimination, which is above average from past studies." However, further

research of most of these cases occurred soon after a citizenship referendum was held in May, that allowed citizens to vote on whether or not being born in Ireland provided automatic citizenship. It was discovered that most of the reported abuse and discrimination cases involved refugees and new immigrants. In spite of this slight increase, only one percent of discrimination reports were based on racial or ethnic origin. In addition, the Irish Police's (An Garda Siochana) Racial and Intercultural Unit also "records racially motivated crime" and provides police with instruction booklets on how to interact with different ethnic, cultural, and racial groups. The Police Commissioner has also appointed Police Ethnic Liaison Officers in district and divisional police stations throughout the country. The country consistently follows the EU laws and regulations regarding religious tolerance.

During its EU Presidency, Ireland encouraged all member states to be pro-active in combating anti-Semitism and explained how proper education and training about anti-Semitism, human rights, and cultural diversity would strengthen the EU community and reduce discrimination. On the international level, the country has sponsored a UN Resolution on Religious Tolerance for the last 20 years. In response to Israel's request that anti-Semitism be specifically mentioned in the annual resolution for 2003, Ireland proposed a General Assembly resolution on anti-Semitism, which all EU member states supported.

Italy

Surveys conducted by independent research centers confirmed the persistence of some societal prejudices against Judaism. Recent public opinion surveys indicate that anti-Semitism is growing in Italy. According to pollsters, this trend is tied to, and in some cases fed by, widespread opposition to the Sharon Government and popular support for the Palestinian cause. There have been examples of anti-Semitic graffiti in several large cities. In November, vandals desecrated several graves at a Jewish cemetery in Reggio Emilia, but no anti-Semitic signs or inscriptions were found at the site.

In January, Prime Minister Berlusconi created a new "Inter-Ministerial Commission to Combat Anti-Semitism" to ensure strong, uniform responses to any anti-Semitic acts by the police and government officials. In April, the mayor of Rome announced the establishment of a museum dedicated to the Shoah. In November, the Government created a new office to combat racial and ethnic discrimination through education, mass media campaigns, and judicial assistance to victims of discrimination. The new office lists Muslims, Jews, and foreign workers as the three cultural minorities most likely to face racial or ethnic prejudice in the country. In 2003, the Parliament approved the creation of a National Holocaust Memorial Museum in Ferrara; planning is in process, but construction has not begun. In November 2003, newly appointed Foreign Minister (and Deputy Prime Minister) Gianfranco Fini publicly repudiated his party's Fascist origins, condemned Mussolini's treatment of the Jews, and sought forgiveness during a historic visit to Israel.

The Government hosted meetings to increase educational awareness of the Holocaust and to combat anti-Semitism in Europe.

The country commemorated Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27. During the reporting period, thousands marched in commemorative processions across the country, several cities staged exhibitions of the 'memory train' used to transport Italian Jews to Nazi concentration camps, and Italian public school students participated in educational and commemorative programs in schools.

With the Foreign Ministry and the Office of the Prime Minister, the Anti-Defamation League hosted a conference on anti-Semitism in Rome in December. Prime Minister Berlusconi, Foreign Minister Fini, and other high-ranking Italian officials participated in the conference.

The Vatican made a serious effort to combat anti-Semitism. The Holy See is active in OSCE endeavors and sent a high-level delegation to the April OSCE anti-Semitism conference in Berlin. A Vatican document released on March 8, instructed bishops on the exercise of their ministry, and implored them to encourage respect for Jews to combat anti-Semitism. It also asked bishops to ensure that the study of Judaism is on the curriculum in their seminaries for priests and to promote dialogue regarding Judaism. The Pope made several statements condemning anti-Semitism. These attracted notice of the Jewish community. For example, Israel's Chief Rabbis expressed thanks to the Pope for his strong condemnation of anti-Semitism during a January 16 audience.

Kazakhstan

Other than the actions of members of Hizb ut-Tahrir, who printed and distributed leaflets that supported anti-Semitism among other beliefs, there were no reports of anti-Semitic incitement or acts during the reporting period. There were reports of anti-Semitic propaganda in pamphlets distributed by followers of Hizb ut-Tahrir. The Government considers Hizb ut-Tahrir to be an illegal extremist group and has taken action to prosecute members engaged in handing out these pamphlets under Articles 164 ("Fanning Social, National, Tribal, Racial or Religious Enmity") and 337 ("Creating An Illicit Public Association and Participating in its activities") of the Criminal Code.

In August, the Chief Rabbi of the country addressed an international religious conference in Brussels, stating that in his 10 years living in Kazakhstan, he had never faced a single case of anti-Semitism, and he praised the Government for its proactive protection of the Jewish community. In July, a visiting rabbi praised the Government for its efforts to promote religious tolerance and dialogue among Christians, Jews, and Muslims. On September 7, the Chief Rabbi of Israel arrived in Astana to attend the opening and dedication of the largest synagogue in Central Asia.

Latvia

There were several incidents of desecration of cemeteries, vandalism, and anti-Semitic graffiti. In September 2003, vandals overturned dozens of tombstones and sprayed anti-Semitic graffiti on the walls of Riga's New Jewish Cemetery. Government leaders moved quickly to denounce the vandalism, and Riga city services cleaned and restored the cemetery within 2 days of the event. Latvian police arrested five youthful suspects the following week, and the Prosecutor General's office indicted them in October 2003. The vandals could face up to 8 years in prison.

In October, a nationalist organization distributed a commemorative envelope bearing the likeness of an aviation pioneer who also participated in the Holocaust. The Foreign Minister condemned the activity.

The Latvian National Front (LNF) is an organization that purports to represent Latvian cultural values. Its director, Aivars Garda, owns and operates a publishing house that publishes nationalist historical texts and a sensationalist newspaper and newsletter called "Deoccupation, Decolonization, Debolshevization" (DDD). The Chief of the Latvian Security Police has stated that the LNF "borders" on being an extremist organization, and the Ministry of Social Integration has asked the Prosecutor General's Office to evaluate whether or not DDD promotes ethnic hatred. A prominent Jewish businessman alleged this year that the website published a call to kill four Latvian Jews.

In 2002, the Government created a new ministry, the Ministry of Social Integration, whose mission is to promote inter-ethnic tolerance by strengthening civil society and encouraging NGOs to create and participate in educational programs that bridge ethnic group boundaries. The ministry was an active voice in political affairs and was a vocal critic of organizations, like the LNF, that perpetrated anti-Semitic sentiments. The Ministry, in November, asked the Prosecutor General's Office to review whether or not the LNF's newsletter "DDD" promotes ethnic hatred and violates state law.

In October 2002, the country became the first Baltic state to sign "The Protection and Preservation of Certain Cultural Properties" agreement that protects and maintains Holocaust sites. The Government is collaborating with the family of noted American-Latvian Jewish painter Mark Rothko to renovate a synagogue in the city of Daugavpils, the town of his birth.

The country has taken many positive steps toward promoting anti-bias and tolerance education. The Government worked on a Holocaust curriculum development project that will change Holocaust education in classrooms, folding the history of the Holocaust into the country's educational materials. In addition, Ministry of Education regulations required teaching about the Holocaust in schools. For the past 5 years, high school teachers participated in Holocaust teaching methodology seminars.

Lithuania

In April, the police launched an investigation into the desecration of a Jewish cemetery in the Kaisiadorys region. They had detained no perpetrators at the end of the period covered by this report.

The country's Jewish communities expressed concern over an increase in anti-Semitic remarks made by extremists and a few mainstream politicians. The political leadership of the country and the national press generally condemned anti-Semitic statements when they occurred.

In April 2003, the Council of Europe (COE) criticized the Government for not taking action against the anti-Semitic statements of individuals seeking political office; the publication of anti-Semitic articles in the media; the distribution of anti-Semitic proclamations and other materials; acts of vandalism against Jewish graves and monuments; and anti-Semitic statements during public gatherings. There were similar occurrences this year; in addition, multiple anonymous anti-Semitic comments appeared on the Internet.

In February, state institutions received anonymous anti-Semitic proclamations. The proclamations railed against Jews, calling them among other things "vampires of the population," an epithet that the country's Ambassador to Israel, Alfonsas Eidintas, cited in his book "Jews, Lithuanians, and the Holocaust" as an example of Nazi propaganda. In response, government representatives publicly condemned anti-Semitism. Also in February, a popular national daily Respublika carried a series of editorials with obvious anti-Semitic undertones. The series was entitled "Who Rules the World?" and the final editorial

answered—"the Jews." A cartoon accompanying the series was reminiscent of Nazi propaganda, and featured grotesque caricatures of a Jew and a homosexual supporting a large globe. The editorial blamed Jewish organized crime figures for exploiting the Holocaust tragedy to avoid punishment for their own criminal activities, and it focused on the alleged failure of the Jewish Community to disassociate themselves from such criminals. The main thrust of the article was that Jews are the wealthiest and most powerful societal group in the world and control world events. Government officials at the highest levels condemned the publication of the series and the anti-Semitic sentiments therein, but the Jewish community and others criticized the Government for responding too slowly. Local NGOs and representatives of other religious groups similarly denounced the anti-Semitic articles. The Prosecutor General's Office and the State Security Department launched pre-trial investigations of Respublika's editor-in-chief for inciting ethnic and racial hatred. The case was pending at year's end. In April, the Parliament formed a working group to draft legislation increasing the penalties for inciting discord, anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobia.

In June 2003, media reports prompted the State Security Department to investigate the publication of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" in a low-circulation periodical Zemaitijos Parlamentas, and the publication was discontinued. In December 2003, members of the National Democratic Party, led by a member of the Siauliai city council, attempted to prevent the lighting of a menorah during a Hanukkah celebration and insulted members of the local Jewish community. The Siauliai mayor publicly apologized for the incident.

The Jewish community has argued that, while most school textbooks accurately and fairly present the Holocaust, some perpetuate unfavorable stereotypes of Lithuania's pre-World War II Jewish community and thereby promote intolerance. Although the Ministry of Education attempted to ensure the historical accuracy of school textbooks, the educational system allowed a great deal of leeway for individual teachers to choose their own texts. Teachers are therefore able to use textbooks that are not recommended by the Government and that may portray an unfavorable and outdated view of the country's pre-War Jewish community.

An estimated 10 percent of the population of the country before World War II was Jewish. More than 200,000 Jewish persons (approximately 95 percent of that population) were killed in the Holocaust. The country still was reconciling itself with its past and working to understand it better. In 1998, President Valdas Adamkus established a historical commission to investigate both the crimes of the Holocaust and the subsequent Soviet occupation. The commission has held annual conferences and several seminars, published several reports, and cosponsored a Holocaust education program.

From January to September, the Prosecutor General's Office initiated six investigations of genocide cases, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. These new cases (which brought the total of such cases initiated since 1990 to approximately 188) included six investigations of killings in 1941, according to the Simon Wiesenthal Center. There were 25 such cases, involving 140 to 150 individuals, pending in September. The Government continued to support the International Commission to Investigate the Crimes of Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. The Commission, which includes historians, human rights representatives, representatives of international Jewish organizations, and both Lithuanian and foreign lawyers, produced new reports during the reporting period. The Commission in cooperation with Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority) and other organizations continued to implement a program of Holocaust education, including tolerance development, in the country's schools. The Commission organized conferences and seminars to promote the development of a tolerant civil society.

A March poll indicated that anti-Semitism was more alarming to residents in large cities, while people living in rural areas tended not to notice it. Respondents of older generations had a poorer opinion of Lithuanian-Jewish relations than people aged between 18 and 25 who more often defined relations as good.

The Seimas (Parliament) commemorated Holocaust Day by publicly acknowledging and apologizing for the killing of Jews and destruction of Jewish culture in the country during World War II.

The Government and City of Vilnius continued a program using private funds to rebuild parts of the Jewish quarter in Vilnius with the understanding that the Jewish community will have use of some of the space upon completion of the project. In September 2003, the Government returned 46 Torah scrolls (in addition to 309 such scrolls turned over in January 2002) to an Israeli spiritual and heritage group for distribution among Jewish congregations worldwide.

Macedonia

On March 4, several spectators hung banners with swastikas at a handball match near the city of Bitola. Police officials present did not confront the individuals responsible for the banners, and pictures of the policemen standing in front of the banners appeared in newspapers the following day. Several newspapers published editorials critical of the police's inaction, and the Ministry of the Interior later disciplined the officers in question.

Moldova

In March more than 70 tombstones were desecrated in the Jewish cemetery in Tiraspol, the principal city of the breakaway Transnistria region that is not controlled by the Moldovan authorities. Swastikas and other Nazi symbols were painted on monuments, and many tombstones were damaged beyond repair. On May 4, unknown persons attempted to set the Tiraspol synagogue on fire by throwing a Molotov cocktail onto the premises. The attack failed when passers-by extinguished the fire. Transnistrian authorities believed the attacks were perpetrated by the same persons and claimed they were investigating the incidents.

In February 2003, unknown persons destroyed eight tombstones in a Jewish cemetery in Balti. However, according to a leading rabbi in Chisinau, it was not clear whether anti-Semitism motivated the event.

Netherlands

The National Expertise Center for Discrimination, founded in 1998, deals with cases of discrimination that come under Dutch criminal law and registers all criminal cases in this area. In the years 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003, the joint prosecutor offices recorded 214, 198, 242 and 204 discrimination cases respectively, of which about a quarter concerned cases of anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism, particularly among Muslims, was linked in many cases to the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Most anti-Semitic incidents were not violent and included abusive language, hate mail, verbal insults at soccer matches, Internet "chat room" discussions, as well as persistent historical revisionism (such as Holocaust denial). However, pockets of militant young Muslims, mostly Moroccans, on a number of occasions assaulted or intimidated identifiable Jews. In addition to the anti-Semitic acts carried out by a relatively small group of Arab youths, the virulent anti-Israel sentiment among certain groups in society, such as the Arab European League and the Stop the Occupation movement, also have contributed to an anti-Semitic atmosphere in some quarters.

The Center for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI) in its latest report covering the period January 2003 to May 2004 registered 334 anti-Semitic incidents in 2003, compared to 359 in 2002, the first decrease (7.5 percent) in anti-Semitic incidents since 2000. In addition, the number of serious incidents (physical violence, threat with violence, and defacing of cemeteries and synagogues) decreased by 40 percent. Provisional statistics covering the first 4 months of 2004 confirmed this trend. Reportedly, a considerable number of anti-Semitic offenders were of north-African origin.

Reacting to CIDI reports on increasing anti-Semitism in recent years, the Parliament requested that the Government present an action plan to combat anti-Semitism in June 2003. The Government responded in October 2003 but placed the action plan in the broader context of its efforts to combat discrimination of all kinds, and it did not propose new policy specifically designed to combat anti-Semitism. The plan proposed that parents have primary responsibility for preventing anti-Semitic incidents; however, schools also could help to combat discrimination and inculcate respect and tolerance. Public debate and dialogue were other tools to achieve these goals, and several NGOs launched projects such as Een Ander Joods Geluid (An Alternative Jewish Viewpoint) to foster debate on equality, tolerance, and human dignity. Also, the Dutch Coalition for Peace called on Jews, Palestinians, and other Muslims in the country to work together to restore peace in the Middle East.

Stricter instructions to prosecutors and the police took effect in April 2003 to ensure proper attention to incidents of discrimination. Measures also were taken to deal more effectively with discrimination on the Internet. The Ministry of Education provided schools with guidelines to offer instruction on different religions and ideologies in conjunction with discrimination and intolerance as well as on the persecution of Jewish persons in World War II. The Ministry of Welfare subsidized a special program to teach children about World War II and the persecution of Jewish persons. In particular, the program was designed to raise awareness about the consequences of prejudice. The Government promoted dialogue and supported initiatives to create a better understanding between Jewish persons and Muslims persons.

Norway

Members of the Jewish community reported a doubling of anti-Semitic incidents in the last 2 years. The majority of the roughly 40 reported incidents in 2003 involved verbal harassment of primary and secondary school Jewish students by non-Jewish students. A small number of incidents involved threats against Jewish persons. There were no reports of anti-Semitic violence or vandalism.

The Government was vigilant in fighting anti-Semitism and promoting religious tolerance. In April, Prime Minister Bondevik met with two Norwegian Jewish children who had been harassed on the basis of their religion. At the conclusion of the meeting, he issued a strong public statement condemning anti-Semitism and calling on the public to fight anti-Semitism more actively.

Poland

Surveys over the past several years showed a continuing decline in anti-Semitic sentiment, and avowedly anti-Semitic candidates have won few elections. However, anti-Semitic feelings persisted among certain sectors of the population, occasionally resulting in acts of vandalism and physical or verbal abuse. In prior years, there were reports of sporadic incidents of harassment and violence against Jews and occasional desecration of Jewish cemeteries committed by skinheads and other marginal elements of society.

A credible NGO reported that on October 26 a Jewish youth from Sweden wearing a skullcap while visiting the Auschwitz Extermination Camp encountered three young Poles who shouted anti-Semitic slurs at him. The youth, who reported the incident by e-mail, said that this was not typical of his entire visit to Poland.

In April, the pastor of St. Brigid Church in Gdansk told parishioners during services that "Jews killed Jesus and the prophets" and displayed posters asserting that only Christians could be true citizens. The Archbishop of Gdansk subsequently removed the priest for this and other improprieties.

In June, police in Krakow discovered the desecration of a 19th-century synagogue. Vandals had painted swastikas and a Star of David hanging from gallows on the Temple Synagogue. The desecration occurred a few days before the opening of an International Festival of Jewish Culture in Krakow's Kazimierz district.

In December 2003, a group of Catholics protested what they considered to be anti-Semitic literature sold in a bookstore in the basement of a Warsaw church. The group called for church authorities to close the bookstore, which was run by a private company renting the basement space, and for state authorities to prosecute the bookstore owner for hate crimes. The state prosecutor's office examined the case and found no basis for prosecution. Catholic Church authorities stated that they could not take action due to the bookstore's lease.

The Government supported the American Jewish Committee in establishing a \$4 million memorial at the site of the Belzec death camp, where Nazi Germany murdered 500,000 Jews during the Holocaust. Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski took part in the dedication of the memorial in June.

The Government cooperated with the country's NGOs and officials of major denominations to promote religious tolerance and lend support to activities such as the March of the Living, an event to honor victims of the Holocaust. On April 19, the 13th March of the Living took place. An estimated 6,000 to 7,000 participants, including schoolchildren, Boy Scouts, the Polish-Israeli Friendship Society, Polish survivors of Auschwitz, and the Polish Union of Jewish Students, walked from the former Auschwitz concentration camp to the former Birkenau death camp. In June, the Government held a major international conference to unveil its proposal to open an international center for human rights education in Oswiecim.

The Government provided grants to a number of organizations involved in anti-bias education, including the public-private Jewish Historical Institute (ZIH) in Warsaw. Many of ZIH's staff were also government employees. ZIH was the largest depository of Jewish-related archival documents, books, journals, and museum objects in the country. The Government also provided grants to the Jewish Historical Association, which produces educational materials on Jewish culture, the Holocaust and religious tolerance, and to other NGOs.

The Institute of National Remembrance - Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation (IPN), created by parliament in 1998, is under the direction of a president who acts independently of government control and is elected for a 5-year term. One of the three principal departments of IPN was the Public Education Office, which produces materials for schools, teachers, and students. The office also held competitions, sponsored exhibitions on historical themes, and supported workshops, seminars, and other activities. Educational materials included a major research and documentation project on "The Extermination of Jews in Poland" during World War II. This project included a critical review of attitudes towards the Jewish population during the war, and instances of collaboration with the Nazis, as well as activities undertaken by underground organizations and individuals to rescue Jews.

Local governments have also been active in encouraging tolerance. On December 13, Deputy Mayor of Warsaw Andrzej Urbanski, together with the Chief Rabbi of Israel and Chief Rabbi of Poland, participated in the first public lighting of a Menorah in the history of the Polish capital. Together with Jewish organizations from Poland and abroad, several towns have contributed to the renovation of Jewish cemeteries. Such towns include Ozarow Swietokrzyski, Iwaniska, Goldap, Karczew and Wyszkiow.

Romania

The extremist elements of the press continued to publish anti-Semitic articles. The Legionnaires (Iron Guard)--an extreme nationalist, anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi group--continued to republish inflammatory books from the interwar period. A new Iron Guard monthly, *Obiectiv Legionar* (Legionnaire Focus), carrying mostly old legionnaire literature, began publication in July 2003 and was distributed in several of the largest cities, including Bucharest. The New Right organization (also with legionnaire orientation) continued to sponsor marches and religious services to commemorate Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, the founder of the Legionnaire Movement. Extremists made repeated attempts to deny that Holocaust activities occurred in the country or in territory administered by the country. In March, a private television station broadcast a talk show on "Gypsies, Jews, and Legionnaires," which voiced xenophobic, anti-Semitic, and racist views. The station owners did not respond to a protest sent by the Jewish Communities Federation.

In March, unidentified persons broke into a synagogue in Bacau and broke its windows. The perpetrators were not identified, but were believed to be local youths, rather than members of an organized anti-Semitic movement. In August, Nazi and anti-Semitic signs were found on the inside of the walls of the Jewish cemetery in Sarmasu, Mures County. Five Jewish cemeteries were desecrated in 2003, but no perpetrators were identified in these cases.

On a number of occasions government officials denied or minimized the occurrence of the Holocaust in the country. In July 2003, in an interview with an Israeli newspaper, President Iliescu appeared to minimize the Holocaust by claiming that suffering and persecution were not unique to the Jewish population in Europe. He later said that his interview had been presented in an incomplete and selective way. In December, President Iliescu decorated extremist Greater Romania Party (PRM) leader Corneliu Vadim Tudor with the "Star of Romania," the nation's highest honor. In addition, President Iliescu decorated Gheorghe Buzatu, PRM Vice Chairman and an outspoken Holocaust denier, with the prestigious "Faithful Service" award. This action prompted Elie Wiesel, a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Chairman of President Iliescu's International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania, to "resign" from the "National Order of the Star of Romania," and to vow not to wear the decoration that accompanies the award. (Wiesel had received his award in 2002.)

Most mainstream politicians criticized anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobia publicly. President Iliescu, Prime Minister Adrian Nastase, and several members of the cabinet (the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Culture and Religious Denominations, and others) continued to make public statements on various occasions against extremism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia and criticized attempts to deny the occurrence of the Holocaust in the country. Two government-issued decrees banned fascist, racist, and xenophobic organizations; prohibited the personality cult of war criminals; and protected Jewish cemeteries and synagogues. The Government sponsored several seminars and symposiums on anti-Semitism.

In May, the Government designated October 9 as an annual Holocaust Remembrance Day. On October 9, 1941, the pro-Nazi government of Marshal Antonescu initiated the deportation of thousands of victims from Bessarabia and Bukovina to Transnistria. Senior Government leaders commemorated the first Holocaust Remembrance day by laying wreaths at a Holocaust memorial in the courtyard of a Bucharest synagogue and by holding an ecumenical religious service in the Parliament building.

In May 2003, the Government inaugurated a Holocaust memorial in Targu Mures, a Transylvanian town under Hungarian administration in World War II.

The Government took several steps to improve teaching of the Holocaust in teaching materials and textbooks, although efforts remained limited and inconsistent. In September 2003, the Government released a teaching manual for schools that dealt with Holocaust denial and provided figures for the number of Jews killed and details about concentration camps, death chambers, and the persecution of other groups. History teachers participated in training courses for the teaching of the Holocaust in Paris in 2003 and during the reporting period. Over 50 teachers graduated from the training program at the Holocaust teaching center in Bacau, which was established with the support of the Ministry of Education in 2002.

In October 2003, President Iliescu established the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania to analyze and to improve public understanding of Holocaust events in the country. The committee, chaired by Elie Wiesel, presented its findings to President Iliescu on November 11, 2004. In addition to fully charting the progression and atrocities of the Romanian Holocaust, the report contained a list of recommendations for the Romanian Government to ensure that the Holocaust is accurately remembered by the Romanian people. Among the commission's recommendations was that the Romanian Government reverse its rehabilitation of war criminals; open prosecutions for unpunished war crimes; and enforce 2002 legislation making Holocaust denial in Romania a crime.

Russia

An estimated 600,000 to 1 million Jewish persons lived in the country (0.5 percent of the total population) following large-scale emigration during the last 2 decades.

Many in the Jewish community stated that conditions for Jewish persons in the country had improved, primarily because there was no longer any official "state-sponsored" anti-Semitism; however, anti-Semitic incidents against individuals and institutions continued to occur and violence was used during these attacks with increasing frequency. The Anti-Defamation League reported that while the number of anti-Semitic incidents remained stable in 2003, the nature of the attacks became more violent. Anti-Semitic statements were discouraged and have been legally prosecuted. While the Government publicly denounced nationalist ideology and supported legal action against acts of anti-Semitism, reluctance on the part of lower-level officials to call such acts anything other than "hooliganism" remained problematic.

On April 22, eight skinheads stormed the Ulyanovsk Jewish Center screaming, "don't pollute our land," smashing windows, and tearing down Jewish symbols as Jewish women and children hid inside. No one was injured, but police failed to respond quickly, arriving 40 minutes after they were called. A member of the extremist National Bolshevik Party later was arrested in connection with the attack. The investigation was ongoing at year's end, but it was suspected that both events were prompted by the anniversary of Hitler's birthday.

On April 29 in Voronezh, two skinheads attacked Aleksey Kozlov outside the headquarters of the Inter-Regional Human Rights Movement of which he is in charge. Kozlov is the regional monitor for anti-Semitism and racism in the country, a project sponsored by the European Commission.

On October 17, a group of skinheads tried to enter the synagogue in Penza, but were stopped by parishioners. A group of approximately 40 people armed with chains and iron clubs approached the synagogue later that day. The parishioners locked themselves inside and called the police. There were reports that three skinheads were detained.

Unknown persons vandalized Jewish institutions. On many occasions, vandals desecrated tombstones in cemeteries dominated by religious and ethnic minorities. These attacks often involved the painting of swastikas and other racist and ultra-nationalist symbols or epithets on gravestones. On January 27, an explosion shattered several windows in a synagogue in Derbent in the southern region of Dagestan. Vandals attempted to torch a synagogue and library in Chelyabinsk in February, but neighbors managed to extinguish the fire before the arrival of firefighters. Local Jewish community representatives suspected a local anti-Semitic group was responsible for the attack. On March 29, vandals broke the windows of the only kosher restaurant in St. Petersburg. On April 11, a group of young persons threw bottles at a synagogue in Nizhniy Novgorod. The police failed to catch the vandals, and the criminal investigation was dropped on April 22. In September 2003, an anti-Semitic poster with wires attached to it was found at the Velikiy Novgorod Synagogue. There were several attacks on a synagogue in Kostroma. A Jew was injured during an attack in December 2003. Reportedly, teenagers threw stones at the windows and covered the synagogue fence with anti-Semitic inscriptions. Local police doubted they would be able to find the vandals, and a local rabbi said the attack was blamed on hooliganism.

During the reporting period, Jewish cemeteries were desecrated in Bryansk, Kaluga, Kostroma, Petrozavodsk, Pyatigorsk, St. Petersburg, Ulyanovsk, and Vyatka. In Petrozavodsk, unknown persons sprayed anti-Semitic graffiti on tombstones on the day a local court was to render a decision in another case concerning cemetery desecration. In February, several Jewish tombs were desecrated in one of the oldest cemeteries in St. Petersburg; vandals again desecrated Jewish graves there in December. On March 31, a Jewish cemetery was desecrated in Kaluga and, after the local Jewish community chairman notified the governor about the incident, four teenagers and two adults suspected in the vandalism were detained. On November 25, three of the individuals, including one minor, were sentenced to two years probation. The other two participants were too young to be prosecuted. In April, vandals damaged 14 tombstones in Pyatigorsk's Jewish cemetery. In October 2003, a suspected bomb was found on a tomb at the Kostroma Jewish cemetery.

Anti-Semitism and xenophobic thought has become increasingly popular among certain sectors of the population. Nationalistic parties, such as Rodina and the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), gained a wider voter base by addressing issues of nationalism, race, ethnicity, and religion. Allegations of anti-Semitism were leveled at the Rodina bloc, LDPR, and the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF). Anti-Semitic themes figured in some local election campaigns. There were multiple cases of anti-Semitic statements from government authorities in some of the country's regions, particularly in Krasnodar Kray and Kursk Oblast, as well as in the State Duma.

Originally registered with well-known neo-Nazis on its electoral list, the Rodina bloc attempted to improve its image by rejecting openly neo-Nazi candidates; however, it allowed others known for their anti-Semitic views to remain.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and his LDPR party also were known for their anti-Semitic rhetoric and statements. In Moscow during a May Day celebration, LDPR supporters rallied, carrying anti-Semitic signs and spoke out against what they called "world Zionism."

The KPRF also made anti-Semitic statements during the 2003 Duma elections. Krasnodar Kray Senator Nikolai Kondratenko

blamed Zionism and Jews in general for many of the country's problems and blamed Soviet Jews for helping to destroy the Soviet Union, according to a November 2003 article in Volgogradskaya Tribuna.

The ultranationalist and anti-Semitic Russian National Unity (RNE) paramilitary organization continued to propagate hostility toward Jews and non-Orthodox Christians. The RNE has lost political influence in some regions since its peak in 1998, but the organization maintained high levels of activity in other regions, such as Voronezh.

Most anti-Semitic crimes were committed by groups of young skinheads. The estimated number of skinheads increased from only a few dozen in 1992 to more than 50,000 in 2004. Typically, skinheads formed loosely organized groups of 10 to 15 persons, and, while these groups did not usually belong to any larger organized structure, they tended to communicate through the hundreds of fascist journals and magazines that exist throughout the country, and increasingly on the Internet.

Many small, radical-nationalist newspapers were distributed throughout the country, sometimes containing anti-Semitic, as well as anti-Muslim and xenophobic leaflets. Anti-Semitic themes continued to figure in some local publications around the country, unchallenged by local authorities. For example, an anti-Semitic novel, *The Nameless Beast*, by Yevgeny Chebalin, has been on sale in the State Duma's bookstore since September 2003. The xenophobic and anti-Semitic text makes offensive statements about Jews and non-ethnic Russians. According to the Anti-Defamation League, books sold in the Duma were not typically monitored for content. In cases where Jewish or other public organizations attempted to take legal action against the publishers, the courts generally were unwilling to recognize the presence of anti-Semitic content. Some NGOs claimed that many of these publications are owned or managed by the same local authorities that refuse to take action against offenders.

The larger anti-Semitic publications were *Russkaya Pravda*, *Vitaz*, and *Peresvet*, which were available in metro stations around Moscow. In addition, there were at least 80 Russian Web sites dedicated to distributing anti-Semitic propaganda; the law does not restrict Web sites that contain hate speech.

Responses to anti-Semitic violence were mixed. Authorities often provided strong words of condemnation, but preferred to label the perpetrators as terrorists or hooligans rather than xenophobes or anti-Semites. Occasionally, the Government redesignated these events as criminal acts resulting from ethnic hatred. Human rights observers noted that considerable legislation prohibits racist propaganda and racially motivated violence, but complained that it was invoked infrequently. There were some efforts to counter extremist groups during the year.

Federal officials maintained regular contact with Jewish community leaders. In March, then Russian Minister for Nationalities Vladimir Zorin brought extremism to the forefront of public attention by calling anti-Semitism and xenophobia major threats to the country. Zorin called for stricter enforcement of the country's existing statutes outlawing extremism and anti-Semitism and urging tolerance education programs. In addition, Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev became the first high-ranking official to acknowledge the existence of right-wing extremist youth groups in the country and noted combating this extremism was one of the top priority tasks for the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Federal Security Service. These statements marked a positive step by the Government to prosecute those who commit acts of anti-Semitism, although few concrete steps were taken to solve high-profile cases.

A criminal proceeding was initiated against Boris Mironov, one of the three co-chairs of the National Sovereign Party of Russia, who ran for governor in Novosibirsk. The charges were instigation of national hatred. The major slogan of his election bulletin was "We'll not allow Jews to take power." Experts found the texts of the bulletin anti-Semitic.

In December, Igor Kolodezenko, the publisher of the newspaper *Russkiy Sibir*, was given a 2½ year suspended sentence after being convicted of inciting ethnic hatred for publishing anti-Semitic articles. In June, the Arbitration Court of Sverdlovsk Oblast ordered the shutdown of a local anti-Semitic paper, *Russkaya Obshchina Yekaterinburga*, after the Court found that the newspaper violated the laws banning incitement of ethnic hatred, according to the Jewish National-Cultural Autonomy of Sverdlovsk Oblast. The newspaper had received three warnings from the Ministry of the Press based on complaints from activists. In 2002, the Prosecutor's office had closed the criminal case. The court also fined a company that published the newspaper approximately \$34 (1,000 rubles).

In September, a new course "A History of World Religions" was introduced at some Moscow schools, pursuant to which some students were taken on field trips to local synagogues and other religious institutions to increase mutual understanding. The Government backed away from previous plans to promote a compulsory nationwide course in schools on the "Foundations of Orthodox Culture," using a textbook by that title, which detailed Orthodox Christianity's contribution to the country's culture. Although the book was still used by some schools, the Ministry of Education has rejected funding for another edition and further circulation of the textbook. Many religious minorities had complained about negative language describing non-Orthodox groups, particularly Jewish persons.

In March, prominent rabbis Berl Lazar and Pinchas Goldschmidt together requested that the Government better define the meaning of extremism. Lazar and Goldschmidt said that law enforcement was prone to dismiss anti-Semitic actions as simple hooliganism to avoid calling attention to the presence of extremists in their region, and to consciously protect extremist groups with which they sympathized. In October, President Putin met with Rabbi Lazar and promised that the state would help to revive Jewish communities in Russia.

Serbia and Montenegro

Since July 2003, according to the Forum 18 News Service, more than 50 acts of vandalism on religious property occurred. Many of the attacks involved spray-painted graffiti, rock throwing, or the defacing of tombstones, but a number of cases involved more extensive damage. There were a number of incidents in which gravestones were desecrated, including those in Jewish cemeteries.

Jewish leaders in Serbia reported a continued increase in anti-Semitism on the Internet and the frequent appearance of anti-Semitic hate speech in small-circulation books. The release of new books (or reprints of translations of anti-Semitic foreign literature) often led to an increase in hate mail and other expressions of anti-Semitism. These sources associated anti-Semitism with anti-Western and anti-globalization sentiments, as well as ethnic nationalism.

In 2002, Serbian courts began proceedings in the Savic case, in which an author of anti-Semitic literature was tried for spreading racial or national hatred through the print media. According to sources in the Jewish community, a number of continuances have been issued in this trial. The latest continuance, granted to allow for a psychiatric examination of the defendant, has been ongoing for more than a year.

Slovak Republic

Anti-Semitism persisted among some elements of society and was manifested occasionally in incidences of violence and vandalism.

In early May, sources within the Ministry of the Interior reported that skinheads attacked an Israeli citizen at the main bus station in Bratislava. The man defended himself with a knife and killed his attacker. The police did not release any information to the public about the attack. The Government rarely commented on racially motivated crimes.

In October 2003, the Jewish cemetery in Nove Mesto Nad Vahom was vandalized for the second time, and Jewish leaders reported finding an anti-Semitic poster on a building formerly owned by Jews. The police did not identify the vandals who damaged the 19 gravestones. The text of the poster accused Jews of stealing money received from a government fund for compensation for wartime-confiscated property.

Also in October 2003, three juvenile offenders vandalized the Puchov cemetery in the western part of the country causing \$1,613 (50,000 Slovak crowns) in damages and ruining 22 gravestones. The adolescents were given suspended sentences of 4 months to 1 year. Three other individuals under age 15 were not required to stand trial. Investigators did not pursue charges of racial motivation that carried longer sentences because of the lack of physical evidence.

In November 2003, unknown persons desecrated the cemetery in Humenne in the eastern part of the country. Graffiti in German on the entrance gate read "Achtung, Jude" (watch out, Jews) with a swastika below the writing. Swastikas and inscriptions, such as Heil Hitler, Adolf Hitler, and Mein Kampf, appeared on three graves. The Humenne police opened a criminal investigation on charges of supporting movements that suppress the rights of citizens, vandalism, and defamation of peoples, races, and religion. The Humenne cemetery is a national cultural monument, and the damage was irreversible in terms of the tombstones' value. Restoration work in the cemetery had finished just 6 months before the vandalism occurred.

Jewish community leaders praised the quick action of the police in cases of vandalism, but perpetrators usually were minors and received light sentences. The Jewish community successfully pressed for parents of the vandals to pay damages in the 2002 Banovce cemetery case and hoped this case could be successfully replicated.

A Slovak Intelligence Service list of persons allegedly harming the country's interests, which was leaked to the press in mid 2003, identified three individuals as Jewish. The media and politicians criticized the practice of categorizing citizens by religious affiliation.

According to estimates, 500 to 800 neo-Nazis and 3,000 to 5,000 sympathizers operated in the country and committed serious offenses; however, only a small number of these abuses were prosecuted. The Penal Code stipulates that anyone who

publicly demonstrates sympathy towards fascism or movements oppressing human rights and freedoms can be sentenced to jail for up to 3 years. Only a small number of these abuses were prosecuted due to court delays.

The low number of prosecutions for racially motivated crime generally improved during the past 2 years due to the creation of a specialized police unit and an advisor in the Bratislava Regional Police. Their successes included the arrest of 24 skinheads, including a major neo-Nazi organizer, at a large meeting in 2003. In another success, the Bratislava Police checked 158 suspected meeting places of extremist groups in an overnight raid, which resulted in 14 arrests. Due to this monitoring unit and its NGO advisory board, the police were better trained in identifying neo-Nazi members and more informed about their activities. Interior Minister Vladimir Palko had an advisor on racially motivated crime, who participated actively on the government's advisory commission with NGOs. During the reporting period, the Ministry of Interior assigned specialists on hate crimes to each of the country's eight regions.

Some organizations, such as the official cultural organization, Matica Slovenska, and the Slovak National Party continued to seek the rehabilitation of former leaders of the Nazi-collaborationist State under Josef Tiso. Meetings and demonstrations to commemorate the anniversary of the first Slovak State from World War II occurred annually throughout the country. At these and other events, extremists frequently appeared in the uniforms of the Hlinka guards, who identified and sent Jewish persons to the concentration camps during World War II.

The Jewish community continued to protest the failure of the courts to resolve a lawsuit against Martin Savel, a former editor of the publishing house Agres. Savel published anti-Semitic literature and the anti-Jewish magazine Voice of Slovakia in the early 1990s.

Public cooperation was integral to the reconstruction of a Jewish cemetery in Bratislava, which involved rerouting tram tracks. The site, including the grave of 19th-century Jewish scholar R. Moshe Schreiber (the Chatam Sofer), was restored in 2001 with substantial financing from the Bratislava Local Council as well as from a foreign organization, the International Committee for the Preservation of the Gravesites of Geonai in Pressburg.

The Government promoted interfaith dialogue and understanding by supporting events organized by various religious groups. The Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities was invited to, and participated in the activities. The Government approved an extension of its action plan to fight all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other expressions of Intolerance for the years 2004-2005. The prior plan supported training for police officers, penitentiary workers, and teachers and also included public awareness campaigns.

The Ministry of Education and the Institute of Judaism conducted a joint educational project on Jewish history and culture targeted to elementary and high school teachers of history, civic education, and ethics to educate the public about Jewish themes and increase tolerance toward minorities. The project continued to be very successful and well received. Since 2002, several teachers participated in summer training programs abroad. Groups of teachers visited former concentration camps for training in Holocaust education. To assist teachers with instruction about the Holocaust, the Ministry of Education published and distributed a textbook to four teacher-training centers. In 2003, a Holocaust Center was established as a joint project of the Bratislava Jewish community and the Milan Simecka Foundation. It released several publications dealing with the Holocaust in the country, Jewish wartime history, and memoirs of Jewish personalities.

In May, the Director of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities (UZZNO) criticized the state-run Slovak Television (STV) for canceling a documentary film about the country during wartime. The documentary chronicled a Jewish pogrom in the town of Topolcany and included an anti-Semitic statement from a local citizen. UZZNO believed societal attitudes should be discussed openly and addressed by the Government. STV management defended its decision pointing to possible liability issues relating to the Broadcasting and Retransmission Act. The station eventually aired the documentary and a panel discussion on anti-Semitism and the Holocaust.

The NGO People Against Racism and the Ministry of Interior monitored websites on the Internet that contained hate speech and provided information about skinheads. Foreign servers hosted many of these Web sites.

Slovenia

The Jewish community had 140 official members and approximately 300-400 people who informally self-identified as Jews.

In early October, there was one incident involving the desecration of a Jewish family grave.

Jewish community representatives reported widespread prejudice, ignorance, and false stereotypes being spread within

society. Reportedly, negative images of Jews were common in private commentary and citizens generally did not consider Jews to be a native population, despite their uninterrupted presence in the country for many centuries. While prejudice existed beneath the surface, there were no reports of overt verbal or physical harassment.

The Government promoted anti-bias and tolerance education through its programs in primary and secondary schools, with the Holocaust as an obligatory topic in the contemporary history curriculum. However, teachers had a great deal of latitude in deciding how much time to devote to it. The country formally established May 9 as Holocaust Memorial Day. Schools commemorated the day by showing documentaries, assigning essay topics, and holding discussions on the Holocaust.

Spain

The Jewish community reported incidents of verbal harassment, vandalism of synagogues and Jewish community institutions, and increasing anti-Semitic sentiment in newspaper commentary and at sporting events. Local officials were accused of sharing anti-Jewish views. Members of the Jewish community have said that they fear identifying themselves or wearing their traditional Kippa because it could make them a target for attacks. There were reports of vandalism to Jewish community institutions in Toledo, Melilla, and Barcelona, where incidents of harassment also occurred. Jewish groups also reported that local extremist groups monitored them. The regional government responded by increasing security at the center.

In Barcelona, an official of the Barcelona Israeli Community (CIB) said a grandfather and son and some Jewish worshippers were verbally attacked as they left a cultural activity in March and April.

In March, two Jewish synagogues in Barcelona belonging to the Jewish Community of Barcelona and the ATID Jewish Community were vandalized with anti-Semitic graffiti on the walls of the synagogue.

In June, a plaque honoring victims of the Holocaust in the Montjuic Cemetery in Barcelona was vandalized for the fourth time since 2002. The Barcelona City Council paid for part of the restoration. In October, a group of individuals painted anti-Semitic slogans in German on the walls of the ATID community center and the Sefardi School. After the June and October incidents, the Catalan Government temporarily provided additional security for the community center and the school. The president of the CIB stated that attacks represented a threat not only to the Jewish community in Barcelona, but also to society in general.

During the week of August 9, on a Jewish holy day, local youth attacked a synagogue in Melilla with stones as worshippers celebrated the Prayer of Shabaat. No arrests were made in the incident.

Officials from B'nai B'rith suggested there was an increasing anti-Semitic tone in newspaper commentary and political cartoons as well as public displays of anti-Semitism at major sporting events. They cited the example of a soccer game held in Madrid following the March 11 train bombings. Some participants at the game wore swastikas and other Nazi emblems and displayed a banner with an anti-Semitic epithet.

Jewish officials in Catalonia reported that local officials were insensitive to anti-Jewish sentiment and expressed the view that anti-Semitism was openly present in government institutions. One example was the placement of a Star of David side-by-side with a swastika on a City Hall Web page. Jewish representatives in Barcelona approached local government officials requesting the symbol be removed. City officials removed the symbols without explanation and did not apologize for the incident.

In November, the mayor of Oleiros, La Coruna approved public signs that described the Israeli Prime Minister as an "animal" and labeled members of his government "neo-Nazis." Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos responded to the incident by issuing a strong statement calling on the mayor to remove the signs. Facing intense pressure from national and local government officials and extensive criticism in the national press, the mayor agreed to remove the signs.

In March, the Spanish Ministries of Justice and Education met with representatives of a B'nai B'rith to discuss how to revise inaccurate historical references on Jewish history and other materials related to the Jewish religion in textbooks. They made a general nonbinding agreement that textbook editors would consult with religious groups before publishing material, including those that refer to Jewish religion or history.

On May 27, Catalan police arrested three leaders of a neo-Nazi group called the Circle of Indo-European Research on charges of being members of an illicit association that opposes the fundamental rights and public freedom of citizens within the international community. The police and Jewish community leaders believed the Circle leaders were involved in synagogue attacks in March. One of the group leaders was charged with illicit association, one was released on bail, and a third case was still pending.

On October 15, partly in response to attacks against Jewish persons and institutions, the Council of Ministers approved a proposal from the Ministry of Justice called the Foundation for Pluralism and Coexistence. The Foundation provided approximately \$4 million (3 million euro) in public funding to contribute to cultural, educational, and social integration programs and projects of all non-Catholic confessions (Muslim, Jewish, and Evangelical) that had a Cooperation Agreement with the country and were not directly related with religious practices.

The Law of Religious Freedom provided for religious freedom and the freedom of worship by individuals and groups, and the Government generally enforced this law in practice.

The Catalonia Government provided public funds to renovate traditional Jewish centers of learning and culture. In Girona, Catalonia, city officials funded the renovation of the birthplace of a prominent Jewish intellectual, Bonastruc ca Porta, who was born there in the twelfth century. Jewish communities welcomed the city's efforts to renovate traditional Jewish quarters in Girona, which they considered to be the birthplace of Jewish intellectual heritage in the country.

In December, the country designated January 27 as Holocaust Remembrance Day. Also in December, the OSCE Ministerial meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria welcomed Spain's offer to host a third conference on anti-Semitism and other tolerance issues in June 2005 in Cordoba.

Sweden

According to police statistics, the number of reported anti-Semitic hate crimes has increased since the end of the 1990s, averaging approximately 130 annually during the period 2000 to 2003. During 2003, 128 crimes were reported; of these 3 were classified as assaults, 52 as agitation against an ethnic group, and 35 as unlawful threat/harassment. There was a growing awareness of that there were particular problems with anti-Semitism among certain immigrant populations.

Some members of the Jewish community believed that increases in attacks were linked directly to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and increased tensions in the Middle East. Since the beginning of the second intifada in 2000, the Jewish community felt increasingly threatened by Islamic and leftist extremists. There were a number of high profile incidents in Malmo in the past years. In March, four young people of Arab origin broke into a Jewish-owned shop in Malmo, shouting anti-Semitic epithets and threats, and attacked the shop owner and another Jewish person. The shop owner was sent to the hospital for treatment. Two weeks earlier, Muslims had thrown stones at employees of the Jewish Burial Society at the Jewish cemetery in Malmo. In June, a football match ended with Jewish players being attacked by Muslim Somali players. In April 2003, there was an attempted arson at the purification room of the Jewish cemetery.

On March 26, an NGO reported that two members of Hizb ut-Tahrir handed out leaflets near a mosque in Stockholm that urged the liquidation of Jews in Palestine. The Imam of the mosque subsequently denounced violence against Jews.

On April 15, a credible NGO reported that a swastika appeared near the Jewish community building in Gothenburg and an empty cartridge was found nearby. The police investigation continued at year's end. During the night of April 17, the same NGO also reported that 17 gravestones were broken in the Jewish cemetery in Stockholm.

During the past few years, the Government took steps to combat anti-Semitism by increasing awareness of Nazi crimes and the Holocaust. Following a 1998 public opinion poll that showed a low percentage of schoolchildren had even basic knowledge about the Holocaust, the Government launched nationwide Holocaust education projects. Approximately one million copies of the education project's core textbook were in circulation and available in many languages at no cost to every household with children.

Switzerland

The Swiss Observatory of Religions based in Lausanne believed that anti-Semitic feelings increased during the last decade. Although physical violence was rare, most anti-Semitic remarks were fueled by extensive media reports over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Holocaust Assets issue.

There were few anti-Semitic incidents and, with one exception, they were of a purely verbal nature that resulted in no physical harm to any member of the Jewish community or any damage to Jewish property. The only act of physical violence against Jewish property during the reporting period occurred over the weekend of February 14 to 15 in Geneva. Unknown vandals entered the joint premises of a Jewish kindergarten and a sports association, smashing windows and furniture, stealing computer equipment, and spray-painting anti-Semitic graffiti on the entrance door.

A study released by the Zurich University on March 26 found no evidence of anti-Semitism in the country's German-language media but noted that newspapers and electronic media often resorted to questionable stereotypes. The few journalists who engaged in anti-Semitic rhetoric later apologized. Nevertheless, other xenophobic and revisionist publications existed, sometimes using Internet websites abroad to avoid prosecution.

On April 26, the Zurich lawyer and honorary chairman of the Jewish religious community, Sigi Feigel, sued the political party Europa Partei Schweiz, claiming that it sponsored newspaper advertisements comparing Israel to Nazi Germany. The party, which was not represented in Parliament, ran advertisements in the daily Tages-Anzeiger the day after the killing of Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi calling on the country to cut off diplomatic relations and end military cooperation with Israel. The advertisements referred to "Israel, nation of the Jews" and stated, "with the exception of the gas chambers, all the Nazi instruments are being used against (Israel's) resident population." The party was charged under antiracism laws.

The Penal Code criminalizes racist or anti-Semitic expression, whether in public speech or in printed material.

At an April conference sponsored by the OSCE on anti-Semitism in Berlin, Franz von Daniken, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, highlighted the various ways the country was confronting anti-Semitism. He condemned all forms of racism and anti-Semitism and fully endorsed the OSCE measures to promote tolerance and nondiscrimination.

To counter anti-Semitism and racism, in 2002 the Federal Department of the Interior established a Federal Service for the Combating of Racism to coordinate antiracism activities of the Federal Administration with cantonal and communal authorities. The Federal Service had a budget of \$11.1 million (15 million Swiss francs) to use over a 5-year period. Of this money, \$370,000 (500,000 Swiss francs) per year was reserved for the establishment of new local consultation centers where victims of racial or religious discrimination may seek assistance. Approximately 130 of these consultation centers or contact points already exist in the country. In addition, the Federal Service for the Combating of Racism sponsored and managed a variety of projects to combat racism, including some projects specifically addressing anti-Semitism.

On January 27, schools across the country held a day of remembrance for victims of the Holocaust. Education authorities said the aim was to remember the Holocaust and other forms of genocide committed in the past century and raise awareness of inhumane ideologies.

Turkey

In March, two bombers attacked an Istanbul Masonic Lodge, killing 2 persons and injuring seven others. Evidence gathered in the subsequent investigation suggested that anti-Semitism was at least a partial motivating factor in the attack. According to press reports, one of the suspects later arrested also confessed to the August 2003 killing of a Jewish dentist in Istanbul. Reports also suggested that the perpetrator used his victim's address book and subsequently telephoned a number of Jewish board members of an Istanbul retirement home and threatened them with violence.

In November, simultaneous suicide attacks against two of Istanbul's major synagogues killed 23 persons and injured more than 300 others, including many passersby. The trial for those charged with perpetrating these bombings resumed briefly in November for final introductory statements; the next court session is scheduled for 2005. The Government condemned the bombings and provided assistance to victims and their families.

In an incident that arose out of the bombings, the 17-year-old son of one of the alleged perpetrators of the synagogue attacks and three journalists were convicted of anti-Semitism and could face up to 3 years in jail. The youth said in an interview with the daily Milliyet: "The attacks did not touch the hearts of the members of my family because the target was Jews. We couldn't be happy, but we were satisfied. If Muslims hadn't been killed we would have been happy. We don't like Jews." The journalist and the editors of the newspaper were convicted of providing a platform for incitement against members of another religion. This was the first time in history that citizens were convicted of anti-Semitic activities.

Several Islamist newspapers regularly published anti-Semitic material. Columnists in other mainstream papers sometimes indulged in remarks with an anti-Semitic tone.

Ukraine

There were acts of anti-Semitism during the reporting period. For example, on July 21 the media reported that the main opposition bloc in Parliament, Our Ukraine, expelled Oleh Tyahnybok, a Member of Parliament who made an anti-Semitic speech during a campaign rally in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast.

On August 24, three men attacked two rabbis in central Odessa. Police captured one of the alleged perpetrators, who, while being interrogated, told police that he wanted to kill Jews. As of September, police were still searching for the other assailants.

In April, Jewish community activists discovered that vandals were removing gold from the mass graves of Jews killed by Nazis at the Sosonky memorial in Rivne. However, according to the head of the Rivne Oblast Jewish Council, the municipal authorities took prompt action to restore the vandalized memorial.

On May 23, vandals destroyed several dozen tombstones at Jewish and Christian burial sites at the Kurenivske Cemetery in Kiev. Police were continuing to investigate these incidents at year's end.

On August 8, the media reported that 26 gravestones were vandalized in the Jewish section of the Donetske More graveyard in Donetsk Oblast and that police had caught the perpetrator. On August 20, it was reported that 15 more gravestones in the same cemetery were vandalized. The number "666" had been spray-painted on some of the overturned gravestones. Local police were still searching for the perpetrators.

Anti-Semitic articles appeared frequently in small publications and irregular newsletters, although such articles rarely appeared in the national press. The monthly journal *Personnel*, whose editorial board included several parliamentary deputies, generally published one anti-Semitic article each month. The Jewish community received support from public officials in criticizing articles in the journal. On April 20, the State Committee for Nationalities and Migration filed a lawsuit with the Kiev Economic Court to stop publication of *Personnel* journal and *Personnel-Plus* newspaper for violation of the Law on Information and the Law on Print Mass Media. On March 12, the State Committee for Nationalities and Migration also filed a lawsuit against *Idealist* newspaper for publication of anti-Semitic articles.

On January 28, a local court in Kiev ruled that publication of the newspaper *Silski Visti* be suspended for fomenting interethnic hatred in connection with the 2002 publication of an article by Professor Vasyl Yaremenko entitled "Myth about Ukrainian Anti-Semitism," and a September 2003 article, "Jews in Ukraine: Reality without Myths." *Silski Visti* viewed the court decision as a government attempt to close the major opposition newspaper (circulation 515,000) prior to the October presidential elections and appealed the ruling. At year's end, *Silski Visti's* appeal remained under review.

A dispute between nationalists and Jews over the erection of crosses in Jewish cemeteries in Sambir and Kiev remained unresolved, despite mediation efforts by Jewish and Greek Catholic leaders.

A local court ordered a halt in the construction of an apartment building at the site of an old Jewish cemetery in Volodymyr-Volynsky. However, apartment construction was completed during 2003 and most of the units were occupied. Local Jewish groups complained that the State Committee on Religious Affairs continued to refuse to help resolve this dispute.

A large number of high-level government officials continued to take part in the annual September commemoration of the massacre at Babyn Yar in Kiev, the site of one of the most serious crimes of the Holocaust directed against Jews and thousands of individuals from other minority groups. Discussions continued among various Jewish community members about erecting an appropriate memorial, and possibly a heritage center, to commemorate the victims. The Government was generally supportive of these initiatives.

United Kingdom

Anti-Semitic incidents included physical attacks, harassment, desecration of property, vandalism and hateful speech, and racist letters and publications. The Community Security Trust, an organization that analyzed threats to the Jewish community and coordinated with police to provide protection to Jewish community institutions, recorded 511 anti-Semitic incidents between July 2003 and June 2004.

On June 25, near Manchester, a group of five persons physically assaulted a rabbi while shouting anti-Semitic statements. In October 2003, a man driving past Borhamwood Synagogue shouted anti-Semitic statements at members of the synagogue's security team.

The media also reported instances of desecration of synagogues, Jewish cemeteries, and religious texts. On June 17, vandals caused a fire in the South Tottenham United Synagogue that resulted in the destruction of Jewish prayer books smuggled out of Central Europe before World War II. On June 18, in an apparently unrelated incident, a suspicious fire damaged a synagogue and Jewish educational center in Hendon. On August 22, cemetery officials discovered the desecration of approximately 60 gravestones in a Jewish cemetery in Birmingham. Police charged two suspects with racially aggravated criminal damage, racially aggravated public disorder, and causing racially aggravated harassment, alarm, or distress. In

November, vandals spray-painted swastikas and other Nazi symbols on 15 gravestones in a Jewish cemetery in Aldershot.

Nazi slogans and swastikas were painted on 11 Jewish gravestones at a Southampton cemetery in July 2003, and 20 Jewish gravestones were damaged at Rainsough cemetery in Manchester in August 2003. Police investigated the attacks as a racist incident. In November 2003, vandals desecrated 21 graves at a Jewish cemetery in Chatham, East Kent. Later in November, a deliberately set fire caused severe damage to the Hillock Hebrew Congregation near Manchester, and, in a separate incident, attackers used bricks to smash the windows of London's Orthodox Edgware Synagogue.

Members of some far-right political parties--such as the BNP, the National Front, and the White Nationalist Party--and some extremist Muslim organizations, such as Al-Muhajiroun, occasionally gave speeches or distributed literature expressing anti-Semitic beliefs, including denials that the Holocaust occurred.

The Crown Prosecution Service advised victims of anti-Semitic attacks on how to report the incidents and press charges against the assailants. Police services investigated anti-Semitic attacks, in addition to providing additional protection to Jewish community events where threat levels were considered to be elevated. The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001 made it a crime to commit a religiously aggravated offense such as assault, criminal damage, or harassment. The Act also extended the prohibition against incitement to racial hatred to include cases where the hatred was directed at groups located outside the country. In addition, a 2003 regulation explicitly prohibiting racial harassment and a 1980 case law establishing Jews as a racial group provide legal protection against anti-Semitism. Authorities charged 18 persons with religiously aggravated offenses (the religious affiliation of the victims was not released) between December 2001 and March 2003, the most recent period for which data are available; of these, 8 were convicted.

In December 2003, new employment equality regulations regarding religion (or other belief) entered into force. The regulations prohibit employment discrimination based on religious belief, except where there is a "genuine occupational requirement" of a religious nature.

On October 19, police charged Abu Hamza al-Masri with four counts of soliciting or encouraging the killing of Jewish persons based on recordings of some of his addresses to public meetings.

Officials regularly reiterated the government's commitment to addressing anti-Semitism and protecting Jewish citizens through law enforcement and education. In February, Queen Elizabeth II awarded Nazi war crimes investigator Simon Wiesenthal an honorary knighthood in recognition of his efforts to counter anti-Semitism.

The Home Office's Faith Communities Unit ensured that members of all faiths enjoyed the same life opportunities. The unit also sponsored projects that encourage dialogue and cooperation between the different faith communities represented in the country. The Home Office also was responsible for an annual Holocaust Memorial Day.

All publicly maintained schools were required to teach religious tolerance. On October 28, Education and Skills Secretary Charles Clarke introduced a new national framework for schools to deliver religious education that, among other things, teach pupils about others' religious faiths.

Uzbekistan

Anti-Semitic fliers signed by Hizb ut-Tahrir have been distributed throughout the country; however, these views were not representative of the feelings of the vast majority of the population.

Jews generally are able to practice their religion in Uzbekistan, and there were no reports of verbal harassment, physical abuse, or desecration of monuments or cemeteries related to anti-Semitism. Respected Jewish community members report they feel very welcome in the country.

The Government of Uzbekistan promotes anti-bias and tolerance education in its eleventh grade history textbooks. The standardized textbook teaches students about the horrors of the Holocaust, the Nazis' anti-Semitic policy, extermination camps, and the number of Jews killed. In addition, Jewish organizations regularly conduct seminars on Holocaust and anti-Semitism awareness.

Anti-Semitism in the Near East and North Africa Region

Society and legislation in nations in the region, except for Israel and Lebanon, reflect the views of an overwhelmingly Muslim

population and a strong Islamic tradition. At times, both social behavior and legislation discriminated against members of minority religions. Government efforts to limit or reprimand anti-Semitic expressions have been infrequent, and governments in the region generally have made only minimal efforts to promote anti-bias and tolerance education.

Anti-Semitic violence was almost entirely associated with anti-Israeli terrorism and was not geographically widespread. Numerous attacks occurred in Israel and in the Occupied Territories, and incitements to violence originated from the Occupied Territories. As well, terrorist bombings in Morocco in May 2003 and at the Taba Hilton in Egypt in October were accompanied by communiqués containing anti-Semitic as well as anti-Israeli statements. Terrorist organizations' propaganda in the region frequently was anti-Semitic, as well as anti-Israeli.

Anti-Israeli sentiment linked to the Palestinian question was widespread throughout the Arab population in the region and incorporated anti-Semitic stereotypes in the print and electronic media, public discourse, religious sermons, and the educational system. Additionally, there were some restrictions on Jewish citizens' ability to participate in political life in Syria and Yemen.

Anti-Semitism in the media was the most common form of anti-Semitism in the region. Anti-Semitic articles and opinion pieces, usually rhetoric by political columnists, were published, and editorial cartoons depicted demonic images of Jews and Israeli leaders, stereotypical images of Jews along with Jewish symbols, and comparisons of Israeli leaders to Hitler and the Nazis. These expressions occurred in certain publications and were not common, but they did occur without Government response in Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Anti-Semitic articles appeared periodically in the Algerian press without Government response. Apart from Israel and the settlements in the Occupied Territories, the Jewish population in the region is very small. Most of the Jewish population that previously lived in the region has migrated to Israel, Europe, and North America. The "American Jewish Yearbook 2004" estimated the Jewish population in the region to have been: Israel 4,880,000; West Bank and Gaza 220,000; Iran 11,000; Morocco 5,500; Tunisia 1,500; Yemen 200; Egypt 100; and Syria 100.

Egypt

Anti-Semitic articles and opinion pieces in the print media and editorial cartoons appeared in the press and electronic media. For example, on March 18, Abdelwahab Ads, deputy editor of Al Jumhuriya, accused the Jews of the terrorist attack in Madrid on March 11 as well as of the September 11, 2001, attacks.

On June 24 and July 1, the National Democratic Party (NDP) newspaper al-Lewa al-Islami published articles by Professor Refaat Sayed Ahmed in which he denied the Holocaust. On August 25, the NDP announced that it had banned Professor Ahmed from future publishing, that the editor who approved his article had been fired, and that the NDP and the Government rejected anti-Semitism and acknowledged the reality of the Holocaust.

The Government reportedly has advised journalists and cartoonists to avoid anti-Semitism. Government officials insisted that anti-Semitic statements in the media are a reaction to Israeli government actions against Palestinians and do not reflect historical anti-Semitism; however, there are relatively few public attempts to distinguish between anti-Semitism and anti-Israeli sentiment.

On January 5, the Supreme Administrative Court upheld a 2001 lower court decision to cancel the Abu Hasira festival (for Jewish pilgrims) in the Beheira Governorate. In 2003, the Ministry of Culture had designated Abu Hasira's tomb as a "historic site" and ruled that an annual festival could be held. Villagers around the shrine protested, claiming that the Jewish visitors aggravated the locals with their drinking.

In December 2003, following international expressions of concern, the special collections section of the Alexandria Library removed a copy of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" from a display of religious manuscripts. In a statement, the director of the library denied allegations that the book had been displayed next to the Torah, but nonetheless stated that its inclusion was a "bad judgment" and regretted any offense the incident might have caused.

Iran

According to some NGOs, the media contained anti-Semitic content, including articles and editorial cartoons. Although Jews are a recognized religious minority with a reserved seat in parliament (the Majlis), allegations of official discrimination were frequent. The Government's anti-Israeli policies, along with a perception among radical Muslims that all Jewish citizens support Zionism and Israel, created a hostile atmosphere for the 11,000-member community. For example, many newspapers celebrated the 100th anniversary of the publication of the anti-Semitic "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." Recent

demonstrations have included the denunciation of "Jews," as opposed to the past practice of denouncing only "Israel" and "Zionism," adding to the threatening atmosphere for the community.

The Government reportedly allowed Hebrew instruction; however, it strongly discouraged the distribution of Hebrew texts, which made it difficult to teach the language. Jewish citizens were permitted to obtain passports and to travel outside the country, but they often were denied the multiple-exit permits normally issued to other citizens. With the exception of certain business travelers, the authorities required Jewish persons to obtain clearance and pay additional fees before each trip abroad. The Government appeared concerned about the emigration of Jewish citizens, and permission generally was not granted for all members of a Jewish family to travel outside the country at the same time. Jewish leaders reportedly were reluctant to draw attention to official mistreatment of their community due to fear of government reprisal.

Iraq

After the promulgation of the Transitional Administrative Law in February, the former Governing Council addressed the question of whether Jewish expatriates would be allowed to vote in the 2005 elections. It announced that they would be treated like any other expatriate group. The Government has also denied unfounded rumors (sometimes spread in flyers distributed by antigovernment extremist groups) that Jewish expatriates were buying up real estate in an attempt to reassert their influence in the country.

Israel

Palestinian terrorist organizations, including Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades attacked Israelis and sometimes issued anti-Semitic statements following their attacks.

The Government has actively sought to enlist the international community, including international organizations, to address anti-Semitism. Government officials routinely traveled to other countries to discuss perceived problems of anti-Semitism in those countries. Several local NGOs were dedicated to promoting tolerance and religious co-existence. Their programs included events to increase Jewish-Arab dialogue and cooperation.

Lebanon

Religious tolerance was integral to the country's political system; however, the Arab-Israeli conflict and Israel's occupation of South Lebanon nurtured a strong antipathy toward Israelis, and Lebanese media often reflected that sentiment. Hizballah, through its media outlets, regularly directed strong rhetoric against Israel and its Jewish population and characterized events in the region as part of a "Zionist conspiracy."

The TV series, *Ash-Shatat* ("The Diaspora"), which centered on the alleged conspiracy of the "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" to dominate the world, was aired in October and November 2003 by the Lebanon-based satellite television network Al-Manar, which is owned by the terrorist organization Hizballah.

Morocco

Representatives of the centuries-old Jewish minority generally lived throughout the country in safety; however, in September 2003, a Jewish merchant was murdered in an apparently religiously motivated killing. During the May 2003 terrorist attacks, members of the Salafiya Jihadia targeted a Jewish community center in Casablanca. After the attacks, Muslims marched in solidarity with Jews to condemn terrorism. There have been thousands of arrests and many prosecutions of persons tied to the May bombing and other extremist activity. Annual Jewish commemorations normally took place around the country, and Jewish pilgrims from around the region regularly came to holy sites in the country. The Government actively promoted tolerance. Government officials and private citizens often cited the country's tradition of religious tolerance as one of its strengths.

Occupied Territories

Palestinian terrorist groups carried out attacks against Israeli civilians. While these attacks were usually carried out in the name of Palestinian nationalism, the rhetoric used by these organizations sometimes included expressions of anti-Semitism.

The rhetoric of some Muslim religious leaders at times constituted an incitement to violence or hatred. For example, the television station controlled by the Palestinian Authority broadcast statements by Palestinian political and spiritual leaders that

resembled traditional expressions of anti-Semitism.

In a sign of positive change, the Friday sermon of December 3, broadcast on Palestinian Authority Television, preacher Muhammad Jammal Abu Hunud called for the development of a modern Islamic discourse, to recognize the "other," to treat him with tolerance, and to avoid extremism and violence.

Saudi Arabia

There were frequent instances in which mosque preachers, whose salaries are paid by the Government, used strongly anti-Jewish language in their sermons. Although this language declined in frequency since the May 2003 attacks in Riyadh, there continued to be instances in which mosque speakers prayed for the death of Jews, including from the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina.

Anti-Semitic sentiments, ranging from statements by senior officials to editorial cartoons, were present in the print and electronic media. The local press rarely printed articles or commentaries disparaging other religions.

NGOs have reported on intolerance in the Saudi education system, and in particular the presence of anti-Semitic content in some school textbooks. Saudi authorities have taken measures to address these concerns, including in 2003 the wholesale review of textbooks to remove content disparaging religions other than Islam.

The official Saudi tourism website previously contained a ban on the entry of Jews among others into the Kingdom; on March 1, the Government removed this ban from the site replacing it with a statement regretting "any inconvenience this may have caused."

Syria

The Government barred Jewish citizens from government employment and exempted them from military service obligations, due to tense relations with Israel. Jews also were the only religious minority group whose passports and identity cards noted their religion. Jewish citizens must obtain permission from the security services before traveling abroad and must submit a list of possessions to ensure their return to the country. Jews also faced extra scrutiny from the Government when applying for licenses, deeds, or other government papers. The Government applied a law against exporting any of the country's historical and cultural treasures to prohibit the Jewish community from sending historical Torahs abroad.

Several NGOs reported that the press and electronic media contained anti-Semitic material. A Syrian production company created a TV series, Ash-Shatat ("The Diaspora"), an anti-Semitic program, and filmed it inside the country. The theme of this program centered on the alleged conspiracy of the "Elders of Zion" to orchestrate both world wars and manipulate world markets to create Israel. The show was not aired in the country, but it was shown elsewhere. The closing credits of the programs give "special thanks" to various government ministries, including the security ministry, the culture ministry, the Damascus Police Command, and the Department of Antiquities and Museums.

There were occasional reports of friction between religious faiths, which could be related to deteriorating economic conditions and internal political issues. For example, in 2003, there were reports of minor incidents of harassment and property damage against Jews in Damascus perpetrated by persons not associated with the Government. According to local sources, these incidents were in reaction to Israeli actions against Palestinians.

Tunisia

Since 1999, the Government has not permitted registration of a Jewish religious organization in Djerba; however, the organization performed religious activities and charitable work unhindered. There were unconfirmed reports of a few incidents of vandalism directed against the property of members of the Jewish community. The Government took a wide range of security measures to protect synagogues, particularly during Jewish holidays, and Jewish community leaders said that the level of protection that the Government provided increased during the reporting period. Government officials and private citizens often cited the country's tradition of religious tolerance as one of its strengths.

United Arab Emirates

In August 2003, the Government closed the Zayed Centre for Coordination and Follow-up, a local think tank that published and distributed literature, sponsored lectures, and operated a website. The center published some materials with anti-Jewish

themes, and hosted some speakers who promoted anti-Jewish views. The Government stated that it closed the center because its activities "starkly contradicted the principles of interfaith tolerance" advocated by the president.

Yemen

In June, the Government issued a press release accusing Jews in northern Yemen of backing a rebellion in Sa'da; however, the Government shortly thereafter retracted the statement. The media was prone to conspiracy stories involving Jews and Israel. After the ruling party tried to put forward a Jewish candidate, the General Election Committee adopted a policy barring all non-Muslims from running for Parliament.

Anti-Semitism in the Western Hemisphere

Overall, anti-Semitism was not a widespread problem in the Western Hemisphere. Countries such as Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia, and Bolivia reported isolated acts of anti-Semitic graffiti and anti-Semitic material on Internet sites, mostly by small neo-Nazi and skinhead organizations. Authorities in these countries investigated anti-Semitic incidents and prosecuted responsible parties.

Anti-Semitism remained a problem in Argentina. The number of reported anti-Semitic incidents has stabilized in recent years, although there was an increase in documented reports towards the end of the year. NGOs continued to report vandalism of several Jewish cemeteries, threats to Jewish institutions, sales of Nazi memorabilia, graffiti, and display of Nazi symbols. Authorities continued investigations of anti-Semitic acts and launched public efforts to promote interethnic and interreligious understanding.

Canada experienced an increasing number of anti-Semitic incidents in recent years, including a school bombing, physical violence, and vandalism of synagogues, schools, cemeteries, and private houses in predominantly Jewish neighborhoods. B'nai B'rith Canada estimated 600 cases of anti-Semitism during the first 8 months of the year.

Argentina

There have been a number of recent anti-Semitic incidents. Notable incidents during the reporting period included vandalism of Jewish cemeteries (including the Israeli Cemetery of Ciudadela on the outskirts of Buenos Aires that was vandalized on several occasions), numerous anti-Semitic remarks, threats to Jewish institutions, sales of Nazi memorabilia, and graffiti and display of Nazi symbols (including a school bus belonging to a Jewish school defaced with Nazi symbols in November). In 2003, the Delegation of Israeli Argentine Associations (DAIA) Center for Social Studies reported 177 anti-Semitic incidents. DAIA had not compiled final figures for the year, but expected to report a similar number of incidents as 2003. The DAIA noted that anti-Semitic incidents made up 7 percent of the complaints received by the National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Racism (INADI) in 2003.

A City of Buenos Aires legislator came under considerable attack following accusations that she made anti-Semitic remarks to a city employee who she subsequently fired. The city legislature investigated the case, and the legislator admitted the facts and publicly apologized, but the legislature was unable to obtain the necessary votes to sanction officially the legislator. INADI issued its determination that the city legislator had committed "ethnic-religious discrimination" under the provisions of the 1988 Federal Anti-discrimination Act and will submit its finding to the city legislature, which may take up the case again in its next session.

There were no developments in the investigations of the January 2002 desecration of a Jewish cemetery in the Buenos Aires suburb of Berazategui, the April 2001 letter bomb received by Alberto Merenson, or in other open cases. The Government also reported that there were no developments in the investigation of the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy. The investigation into the 1994 bombing of the AMIA cultural center, which killed 86 people, resulted in the issuance of international arrest warrants for 12 Iranian officials and a Lebanese national associated with Hizballah. In September, a 3-judge panel acquitted 22 Argentinean defendants charged in connection with the bombing, but the Argentine Government has pledged to continue the investigation and efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Brazil

There were isolated reports of anti-Semitism, and there were signs of increasing tension between Jewish and Muslim citizens. Leaders in the Jewish community expressed concern over the continued appearance of anti-Semitic material on Internet websites compiled by neo-Nazi and "skinhead" groups. There were no reports of violent incidents directed at Jews during the reporting period, although there were reports of anti-Semitic graffiti at synagogues, Jewish cemeteries, and Jewish community

centers in Campinas, Curitiba, and Recife. There also were reports of harassment, vandalism, and several anonymous bomb threats and threats of violence via telephone and e-mail during the reporting period. In September 2003, the Supreme Court upheld a 1996 Rio Grande do Sul state court conviction for racism of editor Siegfried Ellwanger, who edited and wrote anti-Semitic books. The lower court's ruling sentenced Ellwanger to a prison term of 2 years, although this sentence subsequently was converted to community service.

Canada

According to the League for Human Rights of B'nai B'rith, the number of anti-Semitic incidents has been steadily increasing over the last decade, with the number of reports doubling from 2001 to 2003. B'nai B'rith reported that there were 600 incidents of anti-Semitism during the first 8 months of the year, surpassing the total reported during 2003.

During the reporting period, there were several acts of anti-Semitism at schools, including the firebombing of a Jewish school in Montreal in April and several incidents of hate speech at Ryerson University in Toronto. In May, authorities arrested three persons in connection with the firebombing, including two 18-year-old youths, and charged them with arson and conspiracy. There were also numerous reports of vandalism at Jewish schools, cemeteries, and synagogues during the reporting period. In June, vandals toppled more than 20 gravestones in the historic Beth Israel cemetery in Quebec City, a designated national historic site.

Senior government officials, including the Prime Minister, have acknowledged that violence directed against the Jewish community was a growing problem and condemned anti-Semitic acts when they have occurred.

Mexico

During the reporting period, the country's Jewish community did not encounter violence, harassment, or vandalism. There were occasional protests associated with the ongoing turmoil in the Middle East, but the Government acted quickly to offer protection. In 2003, both houses of Congress unanimously passed the Federal Law for Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination. The law's fourth article explicitly mentions anti-Semitism as a form of discrimination.

Uruguay

In April, anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi statements were painted in and around Jewish cemeteries. The graffiti was quickly painted over by authorities, although no arrests were made. In 2002, a limited outbreak of anti-Semitic graffiti and propaganda received media attention. Several citizens, including a former minister, were defamed in the graffiti, and there were reports of harassment by telephone. In response, the police arrested three juvenile "skinheads" and confiscated their weapons. The adolescents were indicted and were awaiting trial at year's end.

Venezuela

Statements by senior government officials supporting Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Islamic extremist movements raised tensions and intimidated the country's Jewish community. There were several reports of anti-Semitic graffiti at synagogues in Caracas and two reported threatening phone calls made to Jewish community centers. In August, President Chavez cautioned citizens against following the lead of Jewish citizens in the effort to overturn his referendum victory. Anti-Semitic leaflets also were available to the public in an Interior and Justice Ministry office waiting room.

In November, the Venezuelan Investigative Police searched the Jewish Day School in Caracas, claiming to have reports of weapons cached on the school grounds. According to media reports, rumors of an Israeli connection to the assassination of a Venezuelan federal prosecutor prompted the search. (The federal judge who issued the search warrant was also leading the investigation into the prosecutor's death.) The police found nothing, but their 3-hour search disrupted the school day and alarmed parents. Leaders of the Jewish community expressed outrage following the incident.

Anti-Semitism in East Asia and the Pacific

Anti-Semitism was not a widespread problem in East Asian Pacific countries, where Jewish communities were small. There were overt anti-Semitic incidents in Australia and New Zealand where the communities were somewhat larger.

Australia

The Federal Parliament and most state and territory legislatures passed motions condemning racism against the Jewish community following publication of an Executive Council of Australian Jewry report that noted a continuing, significant level of anti-Semitic attacks. There was a small decrease in anti-Semitic incidents in Australia this year compared to 2003, in contrast to the gradual increase seen in recent years. On January 5, anti-Semitic slogans were burned into the lawns of the Parliament House in the state of Tasmania. Between February and July, several Asian businesses and a synagogue in Western Australia's capital city of Perth were firebombed or sprayed with racist graffiti. In August, a Perth court convicted three men, two of whom were associated with the Australian Nationalist Movement, a Neo-Nazi group, for their roles in the attacks. The ANM members were sentenced to jail for periods of 7 and 10 months.

New Zealand

In August and September, headstones of Jewish graves were smashed or desecrated in two cemeteries in and around Wellington and Wanganui, and a Jewish prayer house was burned in the Wellington area. The Government condemned these actions, and an investigation was ongoing at year's end. The heads of the city's Muslim and Jewish communities said that they believed anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim attacks there were the work of someone outside their communities who wished to incite racial tension between them. The Human Rights Commission, which is Government funded, actively promoted tolerance and anti-bias on the issue.

Malaysia

In an October 2003 speech to the summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in the country, then-Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said that, "Jews ruled this world by proxy." Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, who succeeded Mahathir 2 weeks after the speech, subsequently emphasized religious tolerance towards all faiths. During the period, the Government promoted Islam "Hadhari", which emphasized tolerance towards other religions and a moderate, progressive interpretation of Islam.

Anti-Semitism in South Asia

Anti-Semitism is not an issue of any significance in India, nor in the smaller South Asian countries, specifically Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Pakistan

Although there are very few Jewish citizens in the country, anti-Semitic press articles are common in the vernacular press. NGO sources point out that since India's 1992 establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, the Pakistani media, both mainstream and Islamic, sometimes refers to India as the "Zionist threat on our borders." Nonetheless, the attitude of the media is not reflected in the actions of the Government. The Government cooperated in the capture of those responsible for the 2002 abduction and killing of Wall Street Journal Correspondent Daniel Pearl.

Anti-Semitism in Africa

With the exception of the occasional report of an anti-Semitic article appearing in newspapers, anti-Semitism in general was not a problem throughout sub-Saharan Africa. There are very small Jewish populations in most African countries, and embassy reports overwhelmingly indicate that they do not face problems. The vast majority of governments generally respect religious freedom.

South Africa

South Africa has largest populations of Jews on the continent with an estimated 80,000. While there were occasional reports of desecration and vandalism or verbal or written harassment, no violent incidents were noted during the reporting period.

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