



Coordination intercommunautaire
contre l'antisémitisme et la diffamation*

* Intercommunity coordination against anti-Semitism and Defamation



CICAD IN ACTION...

Working in four directions toward a single goal: combating all forms of anti-Semitism

To prevent, advise and take action....

- ▶ **Assisting and advising** victims of anti-Semitic acts
- ▶ **Systematic recording** of anti-Semitic acts in French-speaking Switzerland
- ▶ **Organizing events** with the media and public institutions
- ▶ Preventing anti-Semitism **through the dissemination of information**
- ▶ Publication of a widely distributed **annual report** on anti-Semitic acts
- ▶ Monitoring the application of the **racial discrimination act** (Swiss Criminal Code, Article 261bis)

Perpetuating the memory of the Shoah....

- ▶ **Awareness-building** for pupils, students and teachers
- ▶ Combating **negationism** and the tendency to minimize the **significance** of the Shoah
- ▶ Annual study-trip to the **Auschwitz-Birkenau** extermination camp
- ▶ **Conferences** and **survivors bearing witness** in schools
- ▶ Producing and disseminating **educational tools** for both teachers and pupils

Dialog and education....

- ▶ **Collaboration and contacts on a regular basis** with political and opinion leaders as well as teachers
- ▶ Active participation in **inter-religious dialog**
- ▶ Educating and increasing the awareness of **younger generations** regarding anti-Semitism and the Shoah
- ▶ Organization of events and conferences **in schools**
- ▶ **Documents for a wide audience**

Defending the image of Israel whenever it is denigrated....

- ▶ Defending **Israel's right to exist**
- ▶ Combating anti-Semitism **masquerading as criticism of Israel**
- ▶ Reacting to out-of-line **remarks untruths** regarding news about the Middle East

Prevention, advice and action...



DR

Assisting and advising victims of anti-Semitic acts

Thanks to its experience and actions undertaken on behalf of Jewish communities in French-speaking Switzerland, CICAD has become a major actor for victims of all forms of anti-Semitism.

CICAD serves as a center for hearing victims' complaints, advising and accompanying them when confronted by such acts.

When a person is confronted with an anti-Semitic act, CICAD strives, with the victim's collaboration, to determine the most suitable solution to the problem.

The systematic recording of anti-Semitic acts committed in French-speaking Switzerland as well as the publication of a widely distributed annual report

Since 2003 CICAD has been collecting, recording and analyzing:

- the testimony of victims
- documents and texts that it has been made aware of

Each piece of information is carefully recorded and is subjected to rigorous verification whose echopurpose is to obtain a maximum amount of information in order to give the victim the best advice and, if need be, to take necessary measures. Each case is unique and dealt with as such, with CICAD reacting according to the circumstances involved in each particular case. CICAD's widely distributed annual report, which is based on this record, provides an opportunity to communicate its analysis of the situation in French-speaking Switzerland and to apprise authorities of the situation with an eye to both to updating legislation and taking concrete initiatives.

Dealing with the media and public institutions

As freedom of speech does not mean that those holding anti-Semitic views may voice these publicly, the media must be vigilant with respect to the publication of certain texts or letters from the reader. Indeed, certain manifestations of anti-Semitism are echoed all too often by the media.



Such was the case during the "Unclaimed Assets" situation affair at the end of the 1990s as well as during the debate on relaxing regulations on ritual slaughter (2001-2002). In 2006 it was the war between Israel and Hezbollah that triggered manifestations of anti-Semitism. At which point CICAD reacted each time by alerting the media as to the anti-Semitic nature of the texts in question.



Alain Bruno Levy and Johanne Gurfinkiel

As for the authorities, CICAD underscores on a regular basis that each anti-Semitic act is an act against our commonly held values. It is thus the responsibility of every elected official to remain vigilant in the face of each and every manifestation of anti-Semitism.

Preventing anti-Semitism through information

Given the fact that ignorance and prejudice are the main vectors of anti-Semitism, CICAD strives to inform the public at large through close collaboration with the media, interviews, the publication of books, brochures and films targeting a wide audience, as well as through the organization of conferences and participation in debates. It also publishes a daily online information bulletin, the *CICAD Newsletter* (at the address: <http://www.cicad.ch>).

Monitoring the application of the racial discrimination act (Swiss Criminal Code, Article 261bis)

In 1994 Switzerland added a new article to the Criminal Code (Article 261bis) that considers any public expression of racism, anti-Semitism or negationism an offense punishable by imprisonment. CICAD continually monitors the proper application of this act and combats those who might wish that it be abrogated on the fallacious pretext that it might hinder freedom of expression.



© CICAD

Memory of the Shoah

Awareness-building for pupils, students and teachers. Combating negationism and the tendency to minimize the significance of the Shoah

Negating the Shoah is not a mere opinion! Since 1994 it is an offense punishable by imprisonment: “[...] *he who publicly denigrates or discriminates against a person or group of persons owing to their race, ethnic origin or religion, be it verbally, in writing, through images, gestures, physical harm or by any other means in such a way that it diminishes that person’s human dignity; or who, for the same reason, **negates, grossly minimizes or attempts to justify genocide or other crimes against humanity** [...] shall be punished by depriving him of his freedom for a maximum period of three years or by means of a fine*” (Article 261bis of the Swiss Criminal Code)

The term “negationism” was coined specifically to describe a claim that the genocide perpetrated by Nazi Germany (i.e. the extermination of Jews, Gypsies, handicapped persons, patients of mental hospitals as well as all other minorities and “asocial” individuals) did not take place and is merely a myth: negation of the existence of gas chambers or an affirmation that they were merely used to disinfect (delouse) people, etc.

Thanks to a body of appropriate legislation, fortunately in Switzerland a negationist needs to be discreet. However, the fact that there are certain individuals who, on a pretext of engaging in historical debate or exercising their freedom of speech, would like to rewrite the history of the Shoah, or of genocides in general, is a cause for concern. A dangerous attempt to return to the past; an attempt to make the most highly unacceptable positions acceptable.

Confronted with such issues, CICAD relies mainly on the younger generation for support. Indeed, it is by pursuing the task of educating pupils in areas related to the Shoah and Nazism, and educating their teachers as well, that the scourge of negationism can one day be eliminated.

Annual study-trip to the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp

Since November 2001 CICAD has organized study-trips to the very symbol of barbarism: Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp. These trips, designed mainly for teachers and certain opinion leaders, are at the heart of a true educational experience: where survivors, witnesses of



© CICAD

the horror, agree to accompany us during each visit; while guides help us better appreciate the historical dimension. CICAD’s aim is clear: to maintain the memory of the Shoah with an eye to combating all forms of intolerance and discrimination.

Since November 2001 more than a thousand people have answered this call. From the very first trip on, a large number of those in charge of public education in French-speaking Switzerland have understood the significance of our action and have shown complete confidence in us.

Conferences and survivors bearing witness in schools

Survivors visit schools to share their terrible experience with all generations, bearing witness each time to the systematic assassination of persons they cherished, who were wiped from the face of the Earth. They also come to confirm and authenticate the reality of an unbelievably monstrous and unimaginable past.

Production and distribution of educational tools for teachers and their pupils

Concerned with the need to assist teachers and their pupils, CICAD has produced a number of books, films and documents. It is in this context that *Auschwitz*, a brochure by the historian, Sabine Zeitoun, was published in 2004, with thousands of copies distributed to educational institutions throughout French-speaking Switzerland. The following year a film entitled *Auschwitz: never forget....* was made. A variety of other educational tools are published regularly, thus complementing the types of documentation made available.

Moreover, in appreciation of the heroic acts of the the Righteous Among the Nations, CICAD wishes to actively participate in increasing the public’s awareness of these heroic initiatives. It is for this reason that the association asked historian François Wisard to carry out research into Swiss Righteous Among the Nations, resulting in the publication in 2007 of a work entitled *Swiss Righteous Among the Nations: Little-known Acts of Courage During the Shoah*. On 28 January 2008, CICAD also organized the first ceremony commemorating Swiss Righteous Among the Nations. This ceremony, attended by a number of important Swiss figures—including Pascal Couchepin, President of the Confederation—for the first time officially honored Swiss Righteous Among the Nations as a group.



Dialog and Education

© IBUKA



Presence of CICAD at the Tutsi genocide remembrance day.

Collaboration and regular contact with political and opinion leaders, teachers, etc.

Active participation in inter-religious dialog

CICAD is a non-religious association working to promote tolerance and civic values. It is for this reason that CICAD considers it its responsibility to encourage the creation of connections between the Jewish community and other religious communities as well as with various other political and social actors.

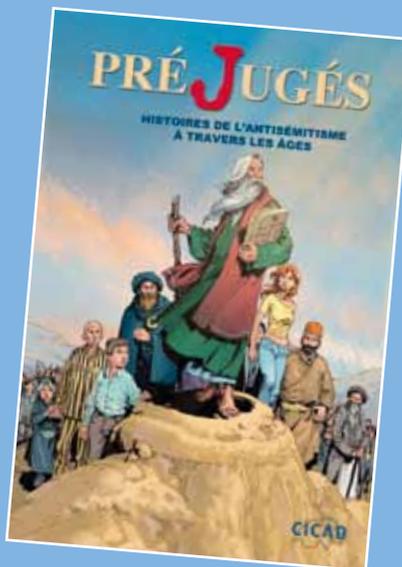
CICAD is desirous of encouraging dialog with various religious communities in Switzerland.

Only through such initiatives will the breeding-ground for exclusion and the rejection of others—ignorance—one day be defeated.

Awareness-building and educating younger generations about anti-Semitism and the Shoah. Events and conferences for youngsters and in schools

Education being an indispensable tool for countering anti-Semitic acts on a daily basis, CICAD organizes adult-education seminars in cooperation with the Department of Public Education of French-speaking Switzerland. In parallel, it arranges for school visits in French-speaking Switzerland, inviting survivors of the Shoah to bear witness and hold conferences on the history of anti-Semitism.

In addition, the offices of CICAD serve as an information and documentation center open to all.



Publications for a wide audience

To facilitate access to information CICAD publishes a considerable number of documents at regular intervals and on an ad hoc basis. Among these:

- Online information bulletin (CICAD Newsletter), available each day to several thousand of Internet users
- *Report on Anti-Semitism in French-speaking Switzerland*, published each year since 1998
- *Guide to a Better Understanding of the Middle East*, a thin brochure published in 2008
- *Swiss Righteous Among the Nations: Little-known Acts of Courage During the Shoah* by François Wisard (2007)
- *CICAD activity report*, published each year since 2006.
- *Celebrating the Nostra Aetate Declaration: 40 Years of Jewish-Catholic Dialog*, two brochures (2006)
- *Auschwitz: never forget....*, film (2005)
- *Anti-Semitism? Anti-Zionism? When democratic debate gives way to hatred*, brochure published in 2004
- *Auschwitz*, brochure by Sabine Zeitoun (2004)
- *Anti-Semitism: knowing it better, fighting it better*, brochure (2002)
- *Préjugés*: A comic book published in 2011.



© CICAD

Defending Israel's image whenever it is denigrated

Defending Israel's right to exist each time that right is called into question and combating anti-Semitism masquerading as criticism of Israel.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict sometimes serves as an excuse to justify expressions of verbal or physical violence against Jews. All too often, instrumentalization of the conflict tends to encourage anti-Semitism.

CICAD has observed a sharp rise in the number of attacks against Jews in Switzerland whenever tensions flare in the Middle East and the media fails to display sufficient reserve in their coverage of events there.

CICAD acts on the basis of criteria established by the European Union's European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (today known as the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights).

These criteria are as follows:

- Denying the Jewish people its right to self-determination, e.g. by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or required of any other democratic nation
- Using the symbols or images associated with classic anti-Semitism (e.g. claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the State of Israel

CICAD is of the opinion, however, that in a democratic society any government may, and even should, be criticized for certain of its actions.

CICAD never involves itself in criticism of Israel's actions so long as that criticism remains within the limits of the above criteria.

Thus, CICAD obviously does not equate all criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism, but it also realizes that there are times when this may be the case.

DR



To illustrate the difference between anti-Semitism and legitimate criticism of Israel, in 2004 CICAD published a document entitled *Anti-Semitism? Anti-Zionism? When democratic debate gives way to hatred*

Conscious as always of the importance of disseminating objective information on Israel and the situation in the Middle East, CICAD published a booklet in 2008 entitled *Guide to a Better Understanding of the Middle East*

DR



DR



How is CICAD financed?

CICAD is financed exclusively through the generosity of members of the Jewish community of French-speaking Switzerland. Established in 1990, CICAD is a recognized association representing the various Jewish communities of French-speaking Switzerland in the struggle to fight anti-Semitism and perpetuate the memory of the Shoah. It is also committed to defending the image of Israel whenever it is denigrated.

To reach its goals, CICAD works ceaselessly to educate the public about anti-Semitism, prevent the occurrence of anti-Semitic acts and maintain a dialog with other communities. Your donations to the CICAD are tax-deductible.

How will my donation be used?

Your donation will go to supporting CICAD's essential work in the area of mobilization and awareness-building—especially our efforts to encourage the younger generations to live together in greater harmony.

Your donation will help us grow!



Faites un don
IBAN : CH27 0857 1308 0380 1000 0
Swift : PRIBCHGG



Coordination intercommunautaire **contre l'antisémitisme** et la **diffamation**

Case Postale 5020 – 1211 Genève 11

Tél. +41 (0)22 321 48 78 – fax: +41 (0)22 022 321 55 28 – cicad@cicad.ch – www.cicad.ch

© CICAD 2012