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## **Incitement to Genocide in the Year in Review 2009: With Special Emphasis on Jihadist Antisemitism and Iran's Threats to Destroy Israel**

Special Folio: GPN Genocide 2010 Year in Review GPN Original

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*Incitement and hate language, notably medical metaphors, especially originating from figures of power, official media, places of worship or school texts, are recognized predictors of genocide. In 2009, Jihadist propagation of antisemitic dehumanizing hate language drives a new world-wide axis of genocide. Leaders of Iran sharply increased their use of dehumanizing hate language and incitement, especially throughout the first half of 2008, but after the disputed election, there was a decline. Turkey was also teetering on the brink of propagating state sanctioned antisemitism. In the Muslim world, Saudi preachers, Egyptian mass media and Palestinian Authority, Hamas in Gaza and, to a lesser extent, the leadership of Fatah in the West Bank in 2009 remain major producers of inflammatory hate language in media, mosques and school books, stigmatizing Jews and Christians. Currently European based antisemitic incitement is coming from an odd coalition of extreme left, extreme right, Islamist, and some human rights groups. Failure of the Goldstone Commission to relate explicitly and with sufficient force to Hamas' incitement to genocide, under Iran's support, was a fundamental error of omission. This legitimizes the use of lawfare to divert attention away from this crime against humanity.*

*Incitement on the internet for recruiting candidates for genocidal terror is the most alarming trend in 2009. Terror groups now use the internet to propagate their messages of hate, grievance, resentment and anger to recruit perpetrators from all over the world, using powerful religious Jihadist motifs of sacrifice, faith and martyrdom to reach out and make contact with susceptible individuals, and create a climate of opinion which is sympathetic and supportive towards terror.*

*In Sudan, the situation in Darfur showed that genocide can occur without public incitement. Rape victims reported use of racial epithets by Janjaweed marauders. In Kenya, rival tribal factions used text messaging to incite to*

*killing, which the government later countered with its own text messaging, to stop the incitement.*

*The US Genocide Prevention Task Force decided against making recommendations to set up surveillance networks for tracking hate language and incitement, on the grounds that they do not necessarily lead to genocide. The "Responsibility to-Prevent" Petition of Professor Irwin Cotler, calling upon the world community to indict the Iranian government leaders for their incitement to genocide, promotion of genocidal terror, and illegal pursuit of nuclear enrichment and suppression of human rights, is the template case for the use of the existing tools of international law to prevent genocide.*

## **Introduction:**

*Words kill.* Use of dehumanizing hate language and incitement (HL&I) all too often predicts, initiates, promotes, and catalyzes genocide. HL&I are “out there”, definable and detectable. Since the Nuremberg trials and the UN Convention on the Prevention of Genocide and its Punishment (UNGC), HL&I are punishable as Crimes against Humanity.<sup>1</sup> The foregoing suggests the hypothesis that prevention of hate language and incitement can substantially contribute to the prevention of genocide.

We give a bird's eye review, admittedly selective and incomplete, of who was inciting to genocide and what was being done to stop it in 2009. We put particular emphasis on hate language and dehumanization.

**Hate language** refers to terms which are used to stigmatize, demonize or dehumanize groups defined by their national, ethnic, religious, racial, or political identity.<sup>2</sup>

**Dehumanization** in particular refers to hate language which includes metaphors—usually from public health and medicine— which induce disgust, revulsion and hate for the other.<sup>3</sup>

Since the Armenian genocide, perpetrators have used dehumanizing metaphors to prepare their followers to become killers, rapists, and plunderers or to silence bystanders.

## **Background**

Hate language without incitement and direction is present everywhere—and by itself, is generally not subject to legal prosecution.<sup>4</sup> Racist, religious epithets and expressions of bigotry directed towards the other are endemic the world round, at the kitchen table, in the barroom, the locker room, (i.e.: Archie Bunker), the market place, and the board room. The messages may be explicit, euphemistic or coded. The past century has taught us that when leaders of movements or governments use explicit pseudo medical and epidemiologic metaphors, such as **microbes, filth, cancer, typhoid, and rats**, to dehumanize victim groups, it is prudent to regard such language as an urgent warning sign of imminent genocide—especially when it comes from figures of power, or appears in official media, places of worship or school

texts. Because official use and spread of such language signals the speakers' intent, its use and spread is the case for action--- now.

### **Jihadist antisemitic genocidal incitement**

In 2009, there is a strong case for recognizing that the Jihadist propagation of antisemitic dehumanizing hate language and incitement drives a new world-wide axis of genocide.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, we can hypothesize that the term “Jihad” is all too often a euphemism for inciting to genocidal campaigns of extermination, intimidation, conquest, conversion, and subjugation directed against vulnerable non-Muslim groups, cultures, states, religious, political and ethnic groups, both within and on the borders of the Muslim world.

Groups carrying out such incitement seek to undermine and destroy regimes within their own countries, which they consider to be subordinate to the West, corrupt, and wavering in faith. Although its antisemitic terminology derives from Nazi propaganda,<sup>6 7 8</sup> jihadist genocidal antisemitism and anti-Christian groups feed on religious notions of exclusivity rather than racist motifs.

Mein Kampf is a best-selling book in the Muslim world.<sup>9 10 11</sup> Its 80 year run translates into a multi-generational inducting impact. The reach of jihadist genocidal incitement is now global, reaching out beyond the entire Muslim world as far east as the Philippines<sup>12</sup> and Indonesia,<sup>13 14</sup> south into Africa,<sup>15</sup> and west into Europe<sup>16 17</sup>, as well as into Latin America<sup>18</sup>, and the University campuses of North America.

### **Iran**

Iran, since the Islamic Revolution in 1979 has been the most aggressive state propagator of this genocidal jihadist incitement. Its leaders' repeated calls for destruction of Israel using motifs straight from Mein Kampf, a copy of which, in Persian, has been reported to occupy center space in the display window of the bookstore at the entrance gate of the Iranian Foreign Ministry.<sup>19</sup> Such incitement fuses motifs of martyrdom with dehumanization, demonization and delegitimization and ensures intergenerational perpetuation of hate through the decades. Israeli Jews --“Zionists”, Jews everywhere, Christians, Bahai, Zoroastrians, and Yezedis are the major non-Muslim groups subject to potential threat.

Iran's state sponsored hate language is particularly dangerous because it goes hand in hand with action directed towards achieving these means. Iran's progress towards nuclear enrichment and the capacity to produce nuclear weapons, its support for Hezbollah and Hamas, two terror organizations explicitly committed to the destruction of the State of Israel, and its suppression of human rights within its own borders, all imply a disrespect for basic human values and ethics, primarily respect for life and human dignity for all.

Leaders of Iran sharply increased their use of dehumanizing hate language and incitement in the wake of New Intelligence Estimate in 2007 and

especially throughout the first half of 2008, but there was a slight falling off in the Spring of 2009 after the disputed June election. The publicity surrounding the release of the Cotler Responsibility to Prevent Petition which calls for indictment of the leaders of Iran for their incitement to genocide, illegal pursuit of nuclear weapons, support for genocidal terror groups and suppression of human rights of dissidents and minorities—an exercise in naming and shaming in the court of public opinion, may also have helped.<sup>20</sup>

But, as we write these words, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has just declared, on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2010, at an International Conference on 'National and Islamic Solidarity for Future of Palestine', that **"the Zionist regime is the origin of all the wars, genocide, terrors and crimes against humanity and that they are the racist group not respecting the human principles"**. He declares that the state of Israel is an *"insult to the entire humanity"* and that "World powers have created a black and dirty microbe named the Zionist regime and have unleashed it like a savage animal on the nations of the region."<sup>21</sup> In his speech, Ahmadinejad used all the motifs described above – incitement and hate language: threats, demonization, delegitimization, double standards and dehumanizing hate language.

#### **Turkey: Teetering on the edge:**

As 2009 ended, there were major concerns that Iran had drawn Turkey into the orbit of state sanctioned antisemitism. Telecast of recycled versions of ancient mythic stories about Israelis as baby snatchers and child killers were alarming warning signs of an extremely dangerous scenario.<sup>22 23</sup> GPN's directors have put out an open letter to the Presidents of Turkey and Israel, warning that Turkey is "playing with fire" by recycling these inflammatory motifs.

#### **Saudi Arabia. Egypt, the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli-Arab Conflict**

In the Muslim world, Saudi preachers and Egyptian mass media in 2009 remain major producers of inflammatory hate language in media mosques, and school books in stigmatizing Jews and Christians.<sup>24 25 26 27 28</sup> Many Saudi supported Wahabi mosques around the world are part of a global network for exporting these motifs to the faithful and converts.<sup>29</sup>

Inside the Palestinian Authority, Hamas in Gaza and, to a lesser extent, the leadership of Fatah in the West Bank are major propagators of incitement and hate language, notably in their texts, television broadcasts, and mosques.<sup>30</sup> According to Dr Arnon Groiss of Impact, a project which monitors textbooks in the mid-east for incitement, Israel is portrayed as a power that harms its immediate environment, as enumerated in a list of more than twenty-five crimes, beginning with its very establishment, through the occupation of Palestine both in 1948 and 1967, expulsion of the Palestinian people, oppression of those under its control, aggression against neighboring Arab states, massacre of Palestinians, assassination of Palestinian leaders, destruction of the Palestinian economy, house demolition, stealing Palestinian

land and water, breaking of Palestinian territorial unity, attempts at obliterating Palestinian national identity and heritage, usurpation or desecration of Palestinian Christian and Muslim holy places, and finally, Israel's responsibility for social ills such as drug addiction in Palestinian society, the meager participation of Palestinian women in economic activity, family violence, and so forth.<sup>31 32</sup> Both the PA and Hamas extol suicide terrorists as martyrs, the PA names streets and public places in their memory,<sup>33 34 35</sup> and its Prime Minister visits and honors families of terrorists involved in killing Israelis. MEMRI<sup>36</sup> The Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education—IMPACT-SE<sup>37</sup> and Palestinian Media Watch<sup>38</sup> have documented this incitement to destroy Israel and, in the case of sources in the wider Arab world, all Jews. Such incitement undermines any prospects for a political settlement, because it ensures intergenerational transmission of the motifs of dehumanization, demonization, defamation and delegitimization. In response, Palestinians charge that Israeli settlements are themselves incitement.<sup>39</sup>

### **Incitement Upscale**

Upscale versions of this incitement of delegitimization, often in the form of mis- or dis-information---notably following Operation Cast Lead, have penetrated mainstream organizations, most notably the UN Human Rights Councils, many European based NGOs . 27 (89%) out of 33 resolutions of the UN Human Rights Council are condemnations of Israel.<sup>40</sup> The statements of the Goldstone Commission and various human rights organizations that Israel's policy in Cast Lead indicated intentionally to kill, destroy, starve or punish or deny access to medical care to the Gazan Population has been intensively analyzed and refuted.<sup>41</sup>

### **European based incitement**

Currently European based antisemitic incitement is coming from an odd coalition of extreme left, extreme right, Islamist, and upscale human rights groups. The images and casualty reports on Israel's Cast Lead attack after 8 years of rocket attacks by Hamas and other terror groups on civilian populations resulted in an unprecedented upsurge of soft upscale version of incitement, characterized by motifs of demonization, disinformation, delegitimization and double standards. A case in point is Mads Gilbert,<sup>42</sup> a physician whose visit to Gaza was funded by Norway; disseminated massive amounts of false information to support his claims that Israel intentionally sought to commit kill non-combatants in Gaza. Major political figures including the Foreign Ministry of Norway, and Scandinavian journalists were at the forefront of these attacks. Israeli based NGOs –Physicians for Human Rights Israel and B'tzelem, in concert with international NGO's, notably Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International, contributed to an atmosphere of delegitimization.<sup>43</sup> These groups, using the terminology of human rights, propagated a mixture of misinformation to promote condemnation of Israel's attempt to defend itself.<sup>44 45</sup> Observers have noted these campaigns represent an extension of the Durban I strategy, of a coalition of human rights groups, who mapped out a long-term strategy of lawfare to delegitimize "Zionism" and "Israel".

At the same time, extreme neo-nazi groups continue to incite against Muslims as a group, as well as other “outside” groups, especially in Europe.

The explosion of jihadist Islamist incitement on the internet for recruiting candidates for genocidal massacres, genocidal terror and hate crimes is the most alarming trend in 2009. According to Steven Emerson, there are tens of thousands of such sites on the web, as compared with only tens which promote moderation and tolerance for others.<sup>46</sup> Self-Radicalization, the term used by Secretary Thomas Gates, does not convey sufficient attention to the importance of massive external environmental exposures producing endemic rises in the background level of hate and alienation. Are the recent episodes involving Major Nidal Hassan,<sup>47</sup> the Underwear Bomber<sup>48</sup> and “Jihad Jane”<sup>49</sup> –all reportedly enticed by such web sites-- the tip of a larger iceberg of endemic haters?

Another alarming development in the jihadist threat is the use of lawfare using the language of human rights and anti-racism, to legitimize perpetrators and promoters of genocidal terror as “resistance fighters” and to delegitimize those who fight to protect themselves from the violence it produces.<sup>50</sup> Interestingly, many times we see an inversion, when perpetrators accuse their victims of doing exactly the same wrongs they themselves have perpetrated. Failure of the Goldstone Commission to relate explicitly and with more force to Hamas' incitement to Genocide, which is a crime against humanity, and to Iran's massive support for such incitement, which was certainly "out there" during the commission's field visits to Gaza, was a fundamental error of omission. This omission has helped to legitimize the use of lawfare to divert attention from these crimes and is a misuse of the international legislative platform defending human rights.<sup>51</sup>

### **Genocide below the radar screen without Public Incitement:**

**Darfur:** The fact that open public incitement increases risks for genocide, should not blind us to the fact that genocide can occur without it. In Sudan, it is in the interest of the government to camouflage the genocidal intentions its President stands accused of in the ICJ. Even so in Darfur, in 2009, John Hagan called attention to the use of racial epithets by Janjaweed marauders, as reported by rape victims.<sup>52</sup> Yet, the Sudanese regime invokes denial, itself a form of incitement, declaring that that the total victims of what it has designated a civil war exceeds 10,000,<sup>53</sup> and is careful to avoid any public state sponsored use of epithets.

**Kenya:** In Kenya, a tense situation remains in the aftermath of the 2008 election. In the wake of that election, rival tribal groups began carrying out massacres and plundering villages of their rivals. In the aftermath, attention was drawn to the fact that perpetrators on both sides were using text messaging before the election to incite followers, often in vernacular dialects and away from urban centers.<sup>54</sup> Later the government itself used text messaging to counter the incitement. Mainstream news media based in urban centers, ignored such incitement because it was considered local news.

The Kenyan story tells us that surveillance networks for tracking incitement need to penetrate deeply into rural areas, especially in the run-up to election campaigns in countries with unstable political systems, traditional ethnic and tribal divides which parallel socio-economic divides, and winner-take-all outcomes.

### **Sri Lanka: Mass killings without blatant incitement**

The Sri Lanka Sinhalese government's military campaign, crushing the rebellion by the Tamilese tigers resulted in 20,000 dead and the confinement of 200,000 refugees in detention camps, who only now are given a measure of freedom of mobility. But, as in Darfur, at this time, evidence is not readily available on the use of open public incitement and hate language in the past year. Research is necessary to determine if there indeed was incitement below the radar screen, what its content was, at what level it existed, and how pervasive it was.

### **World responses to HL&I in 2009,**

**Responses and Interventions.** Many European countries have laws against incitement on their books and enforce them, although claims are made that they are used to criminalize those challenging incitement, and do not sufficiently protect those at physical danger from exercising legitimate free speech attacking ideas and beliefs, as opposed to speech demonizing groups.<sup>55</sup>

In 2009, The US Genocide Prevention Task Force decided against making recommendations to set up surveillance networks for tracking hate language and incitement<sup>56</sup> on the grounds that they do not necessarily lead to genocide. This omission seems inexplicable given the history of the role of hate language in mobilizing perpetrators and desensitizing bystanders during the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide. Using the misplaced logic of the Task Force, one could recommend against legal and educational campaigns against smoking on the grounds that not all smokers get cancer and not all persons with cancer were smokers.

The US Government has so far not followed through on action to implement a 2007 House of Representatives Resolution (HCONRes21) calling for it to initiate action towards indicting President Ahmadinejad for incitement to genocide. It still has not moved forward to recognize its region wide endemic scope and dangers. It has not addressed the enduring dangers posed by intergenerational transmission of motifs of dehumanization, demonization and delegitimization.

In the absence of legal and other countermeasures, will open and public incitement to genocidal Jihadist antisemitism have a free pass? And if so, will there be more hate crimes and genocidal massacres involving the likes of Major Nidal Hassan, the underwear bomber and Jihad Jane?

Although the first version of the Road Map calls for an end to incitement in the Israeli-Arab conflict,<sup>57</sup> neither the UN, the US or the EU have so far taken any measures to set up a surveillance network for defining, tracking, intervention of state sponsored public incitement in political statements, media, school texts or places of worship. At present, a US State Department funded committee has begun performing an examination of incitement in texts of Israel and Palestinian Authority. A member of GPN has been invited to participate in its Scientific Advisory Panel. The methodological challenges in carrying out such an examination include the need for definitions, inclusion and exclusion criteria and selection and sampling strategies, and validation of the sensitivity and specificity of newly developed search engines. The challenge will be to determine not only if these texts are free of negative incitement, but also if they will promote core values of respect for life and human dignity.

The most important positive event of 2009 was the release of the Cotler Responsibility to Prevent Petition,<sup>58</sup> signed by more than 60 major figures in international law and human rights, calling for indictment of the President of Iran for incitement to genocide, promotion of genocidal terror, pursuit of nuclear enrichment and human rights abuses. This document serves as the tipping point in a long campaign of naming and shaming to delegitimize state sanctioned incitement to genocide before there is genocide. There is evidence to suggest that its release was followed by a reduction in the Iranian leadership's use of dehumanizing hate language---although sadly, as 2010 progresses, this reduction appears to have been transient.

Now, the clock is ticking.

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*In the next issues of GPN, the senior author will present extended writing on incitement to genocide including an essay entitled, "Can We Prevent Genocide by Preventing Incitement?"*

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