

United Nation GWI Representative Advocacy Report on Anti-Semitism

GWI advocacy goals

1. 100% of United Nations Member States commit to policy, legislation, budget and infrastructure to facilitate transition of girls from primary to secondary school and ensure gender parity and gender equality throughout secondary education by 2030.
2. By 2030 100% of United Nations low income Member States have increased access to tertiary education for girls and women by 50%.
3. 100% of United Nations Member States commit to and implement policies for continuing education to empower women throughout the life course, within the formal and informal economies.
4. Influence the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.
5. All 17 SDGs will include girls' education targets.

Name: Sophie Turner Zaretsky
United Nations Headquarters, New York
Friday, 18 October 2019

Session/meeting attended:

Side event marking the presentation of the Special Rapporteur's report on combating anti-semitism to the United Nations General Assembly, 2019.

Organised by : The UN Department of Global Communications, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, and UNESCO.

Subject of session/meeting: "Addressing and Preventing Anti-Semitism through Education"

Welcome remarks: Melissa Fleming, UN Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications, Marie Paule Roudil, Director of UNESCO Liaison Office in New York; UNESCO Representative to the UN

Keynote address: Irwin Cotler, former Justice Minister and Attorney General of Canada

Panel: Raffi Gregorian, Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General at UN Office of Counter-Terrorism ; Ahmed Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief ; Felice Gaer, Director of the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, American Jewish Committee ; Mark Weitzman, Director of Government Affairs, Simon Wiesenthal Center

Moderated by Karel Fracapane, Programme Specialist, UNESCO

Sustainable Development Goals addressed: 4, 16 and 3

Relevant treaties, conventions/resolutions referenced/addressed:

- Report of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief
<https://www.ohchr.org/>

- Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) addressing anti-semitism: www.osce.org/tolerance-and-nondiscrimination
- UNESCO: Preventing extremism through education: a guide for policy makers 2017 <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002477/247764e.pdf>
- Antidefamation League – provides useful tools: www.adl.org/who-we-are/
- European Union Parliament Resolution 2017/2692(RSP) on Combating Anti-Semitism.
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948: www.ohchr.org

Summary of session/meeting:

Anti-Semitism is directed towards Jewish persons and /or their property, communities or religious institutions and is a manifestation of hatred of Jews. It exists in religious, social and political forms and guises on all sides of the political spectrum. Anti-Semitism has increased significantly in scope and violence in Europe and the United States. In the not too distant past, it resulted in the state sponsored genocide known as the Holocaust, which aimed to ethnically cleanse Europe of Jews. Six million individuals were murdered. Several speakers stated that Jews are like “the canary in the mine” and violence against them is a precursor to violence against other groups.

Next steps (What needs to be done?)-Examples of combating Anti-Semitism:

- Start education about tolerance and human rights at the earliest age by appropriately trained educators. Teach critical thinking.
- Develop legislation, procedures and accessible anti-semitic incident reporting mechanisms that ensure protection of, and respect for, human rights in educational institutions.
- Develop training programs about anti-Semitism for relevant professionals to include law enforcement, judiciary, clergy and educators, in addition to parliamentarians and community leaders.
- Strengthen the capacity of national human rights institutions to ensure a safe environment for staff and learners, including Jewish students and teachers.
- Appoint a high-level government representative, task force or delegation with the responsibility for identifying and combating Anti- Semitism.
- Demand that social media, media, and the press stop promoting harmful stereotypes, hate speech and false information, and that they be held accountable for their actions.
- Organize peer to peer meetings between Jews and non-Jews to develop mutual understanding. Many anti Semites have never met a Jew.

The listed links above are some of the resources for education about Anti-Semitism.

Submitted by Sophie Turner Zaretsky
 GWI Representative to the UN.