

ANTISEMITIC SYMBOLS SINCE OCTOBER 7



REPORT OF THE ANTISEMITISM RESEARCH
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OVERVIEW

The October 7th massacre in Israel sparked an unprecedented global surge in antisemitism, manifesting across diverse domains, including social media platforms, where antisemitic content proliferated; public figures, who propagated hateful rhetoric; media outlets, which often perpetuated biased narratives; streets and public spaces, marked by antisemitic demonstrations; international institutions, where biased resolutions and statements inflamed tensions; educational and cultural institutions, which experienced incidents of vandalism and prejudiced discourse; and houses of religious worship, which faced increased threats and attacks.

Public discourse about the Hamas attack and the subsequent war in Gaza has been rife with antisemitic symbols and rhetoric, some of which are the newest manifestations of the world's oldest hatred. This messaging has fueled a proliferation of real-life antisemitic incidents, with Jews bullied, harassed, assaulted, and even killed, Jewish synagogues and homes threatened and vandalized, and college campuses overtaken by protest encampments that have become nexuses for bigotry and hostility toward Jewish students and faculty.

To effectively address these challenges and protect Jewish communities, authorities must have a thorough familiarity with and understanding of what is driving the hatred. This report examines both novel and historically repurposed symbols that have been co-opted and disseminated in the aftermath of October 7th to demonize the State of Israel and Jewish people. Many, but not all, of the symbols have strict antisemitism connotations. However, all may serve as an early warning sign of incoming antisemitic activity. Strict monitoring and decisive action, both at the law enforcement and policymaking levels,

with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism serving as a guiding framework, are urgently needed to mitigate their pernicious social impact.

Symbols Definition

Symbols are classified as any elements of messaging used to convey specific ideas or sentiments, both online and offline. This includes, but is not limited to, slogans, hashtags, signs, images, and other visual or textual representations. These symbols can be used in various contexts, such as social media platforms, public demonstrations, and printed materials, and are often employed to propagate specific ideologies, beliefs, or calls to action. In the context of antisemitism, symbols are identified based on their use to incite hatred, violence, or discrimination against Jewish individuals or communities.

This report distinguishes among three general manifestations of symbols: visuals, or non-verbal images; verbal slogans; and physical items.

INVERTED RED TRIANGLE

The red triangle has increasingly appeared in anti-Israel propaganda as a symbol of hate and intimidation. Its manifestations range from social media emojis and graffiti on Jewish institutions to badges worn at protests, and most recently, patches on Hamas Uniforms.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

Historically, the inverted red triangle was used to identify political prisoners during the Holocaust, symbolizing persecution and oppression. It later appeared on the 1917 Flag of the Arab Revolt and subsequently became part of the Palestinian flag. In recent years, Palestinian groups like Hamas have adopted it to mark targets during attacks, infusing the symbol with aggressive and violent connotations. Most recently, Hamas has incorporated the red triangle into patches worn on their uniforms.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The red triangle has been weaponized as a tool for hate, appearing in acts of vandalism such as marking Berlin Mayor Kai Wegner's residence and Tagesspiegel's headquarters, leading to its prohibition by the Berlin Senate in July 2024. In New York, the homes of Jewish leaders have been defaced with this symbol, signaling intimidation and potential violence. Its use perpetuates fear and hostility, making it a significant threat to public safety and Jewish communities worldwide.

The red triangle is weaponized to intimidate and incite hostility, repurposing a Holocaust-era symbol of persecution into a modern tool for hate against Jews.



RED HANDS

The red hands symbol, popularized by the Artists4Ceasefire pin, features a red hand with a black heart at its center. Since October 7th, the symbol has gained widespread attention in advocacy for a ceasefire in Gaza, frequently appearing at protests, on social media, and at university graduation ceremonies in 2024. Additionally, vehicles displaying red hand prints and other provocative imagery have been reported in Jewish neighborhoods.



FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

For many Jews, the red hand evokes traumatic memories from the Second Intifada. In October 2000, two Israel Defense Forces reservists inadvertently entered Ramallah and were brutally lynched by a mob at a local police station. A harrowing photograph from that day captured one of the perpetrators proudly displaying his blood-soaked hands to a cheering crowd. This image has since become a symbol of brutality in Palestinian propaganda, cementing its association with violence against Israelis.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The red hands symbol reinforces a narrative of violence and trauma for Jews, evoking painful historical associations and contributing to an environment of fear and hostility.



WATERMELON



The watermelon's use as a symbol draws attention due to its striking resemblance to the colors of the Palestinian flag—red, green, black, and white. This seemingly lighthearted or cultural reference has gained traction in protests and online spaces, often employed in contexts that mask or obscure its deeper meaning.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The watermelon, with its colors mirroring the Palestinian flag, emerged as a covert form of protest in regions where explicit Palestinian symbols, such as the flag, were banned. By using the watermelon's visual resemblance to the Palestinian flag, it became a subtle means of expressing Palestinian identity and resistance. Over time, it has been adopted as a cultural and political symbol representing the desire to replace Israel with a Palestinian state.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Symbolism of Erasure:** The watermelon represents a subtle but potent message—advocating for the replacement of Israel with a Palestinian state, aligning with extremist narratives that deny Israel's legitimacy.
- **Amplifying Divisiveness:** By embedding this symbol into protest and social media contexts, it perpetuates a one-sided narrative that fuels tensions between communities, escalating hostility rather than fostering dialogue.
- **Encouraging Antisemitism:** While it may appear benign, the symbol often accompanies rhetoric or imagery that dehumanizes Israelis or Jewish people, normalizing such attitudes and contributing to the spread of antisemitism.

The watermelon symbol, though it may seem harmless, operates as a dog whistle for a broader ideological stance that denies Israel's right to exist and promotes its erasure. By cloaking this message in cultural or seemingly lighthearted imagery, it evades scrutiny while embedding deeply divisive and harmful narratives into public discourse. This not only escalates tensions but also legitimizes antisemitic sentiments, making it a subtle yet insidious threat.

“TIME OUT” HAND SYMBOL

Some terrorists and their supporters have used the “time out” hand symbol for propaganda purposes in the wake of October 7.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

Since October 7, antisemitic terrorists, including Hamas gunmen and now-deceased Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, have occasionally formed a “time out” symbol with their hands. Some anti-Israel protesters have formed the symbol as well. One analyst attributed the symbology to the U.S. assassination of Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and Qassem Soleimani in January 2020, after which Iran-backed terrorists used the hand symbol to convey the idea that U.S. military activity in Iraq should take a “time out” and that the United States should “get out” of Iraq. Hamas’ adoption of the symbol is likely meant to communicate a similar meaning, but vis-a-vis Israel’s military campaign to destroy Hamas in Gaza.



THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Use of this symbol during anti-Israel protests should be regarded as invocation of Hamas symbology, much like the inverted red triangle (see item #1 above). Hamas is a U.S.-designated terrorist organization dedicated to murdering Jews and destroying Israel.



ANNE FRANK DEPICTED AS PALESTINIAN

Some commentators and activists have desecrated the memory of Anne Frank since Hamas' October 7 massacre.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

Abducted by the Nazis in 1944 and shipped to concentration camps after hiding for two years in Amsterdam, Anne Frank's story serves as a testament to the unique evil of the Nazi regime and of her resilience in the face of unimaginable

persecution. The diary she kept while hiding in Amsterdam is one of the world's most cherished accounts of the experiences of Holocaust victims. Yet, since October 7, antisemites and anti-Israel activists have increasingly appropriated the memory of Anne Frank to attack the Jewish state, attempting to analogize her experience to that of Gazans during Israel's war to destroy Hamas. Wielding the memory of a well-known victim of antisemitic persecution as a cudgel against the Jewish state and its supporters is meant to cause Jewish communities pain by framing them as no better than their tormentors.



THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Such "Holocaust inversion" is an antisemitic attempt to equate Jews and the Jewish state - victims and descendants of victims of the Nazis - with Nazi Germany. Framing Jews as Nazis exacerbates Jew-hatred by providing antisemites with a false pretext for their bigotry.



Ussama Makdisi ✓

@UssamaMakdisi



A million children of Gaza are terrorized by Israel in Gaza. Bombed for being Palestinian, massacred with their families, trapped in a besieged ghetto with nowhere to hide. The perverse irony is that their tormentors have the audacity to speak & act in the name of Anne Frank.

Last edited 9:49 AM · Oct 29, 2023 · **4,538** Views

"FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA, PALESTINE WILL BE FREE"

This slogan is often chanted at protests and appears on signs, social media posts, and graffiti as a rallying cry against Israel.



FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The phrase refers to the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, encompassing all of Israel, Judea and Samaria, and Gaza. It implies the elimination of the State of Israel and the displacement of its Jewish population. While framed as a call for Palestinian sovereignty, its roots trace back to efforts to delegitimize and dismantle Israel, rejecting international agreements such as the 1947 UN Partition Plan.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

By advocating for the eradication of Israel, the slogan inherently targets Jews and denies their right to self-determination. Its use fosters hostility and has been linked to incidents of harassment, violence, and vandalism against Jewish individuals and institutions. It undermines peace efforts and creates an environment of tension and fear.

This slogan denies Israel's right to exist and promotes the eradication of the Jewish state, fueling antisemitism and hostility toward Jews globally.

"INTIFADA" AND RELATED SLOGANS

Slogans such as "Globalize the Intifada" and "There is Only One Solution: Intifada Revolution" are frequently chanted at protests and featured on social media.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

During the Second Intifada, around 140 Palestinian attacks resulted in thousands of civilian casualties in both Israel and the Palestinian territories, often through suicide bombings. Calling for an intifada implies a call for this kind of violence to reoccur, targeting all Israelis and Jews.



When combined with the phrase "one solution," the slogan evokes not only the deadly impact of past intifadas but also a parallel to the Holocaust's "Final Solution," which led to the murder of six million Jews.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Calls to "Globalize the Intifada" extend this violent framework beyond the boundaries of Israel and the Palestinian territories, advocating for similar violent actions worldwide, encouraging attacks against Jews and supporters of Israel wherever they may be and inciting violence and antisemitism on a broader, international scale.



The term "There is Only One Solution: Intifada Revolution" evokes associations with both the violent events of the early 2000s and the genocide of World War II, intensifying the alarm for many Jews.

These slogans glorify past acts of terror and encourage new ones, posing a direct threat to public safety and fueling antisemitism on a global scale.

"ZIONISM IS RACISM"

This slogan is prominently featured in protests, social media posts, and anti-Israel campaigns, often accompanied by comparisons of Zionism to apartheid or colonialism.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The slogan traces back to the 1975 UN General Assembly resolution equating

Zionism with racism, a resolution influenced by Soviet and Arab bloc propaganda. Although revoked by the UN in 1991, the rhetoric persists, misrepresenting Zionism as a supremacist ideology rather than a national liberation movement rooted in Jewish self-determination and historical connection to Israel.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

This slogan delegitimizes the Jewish state, denying Jews their right to self-determination. It fosters exclusion and hostility toward Jews, creating an environment that normalizes antisemitism and jeopardizes Jewish safety worldwide.

This slogan delegitimizes the Jewish right to self-determination and perpetuates hostility against Jews by misrepresenting Zionism as a supremacist ideology.



“SETTLER COLONIALISM”

The term "settler colonialism" is misleading and offensive when applied to Israel. Jews have a historical connection to the Land of Israel, including Judea and Samaria, dating back thousands of years, making this label factually incorrect.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

Dating back to the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the Jewish people have maintained a continuous presence in the Land of Israel despite numerous exiles and foreign occupations.

Additionally, Israel strives for peace, having offered territorial concessions to the Palestinians, and ensures its Arab citizens enjoy full rights, including voting and political representation in the Knesset. This stands in stark contrast to the Palestinian Authority's strict regulations preventing Jews from entering Palestinian cities, a discrepancy that refutes the "apartheid" claims against Israel.



THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The "settler colonialism" label carries antisemitic connotations by denying Jewish historical ties to the Land of Israel and portraying Jews as foreign invaders. This narrative seeks to delegitimize the Jewish state and undermine the Jewish right to self-determination and sovereignty.

“FREE PALESTINE”



The slogan "Free Palestine" is often perceived as antisemitic because, in many contexts, it calls for the eradication of the State of Israel and the displacement of its Jewish population. While it might appear as a simple call for Palestinian self-determination, it is frequently used to promote the idea that the entire territory of Israel, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, should be a Palestinian-only state free of Jews, effectively denying Israel's right to exist.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

This slogan disregards significant historical and political developments. For instance, Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005, allowing for Palestinian self-governance and even potential statehood. Furthermore, the Oslo Accords, signed in the 1990s, were an attempt to lay the groundwork for peace and the establishment of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza.

However, despite these efforts, the aftermath has seen waves of terror attacks against Israel, thwarting the peace process. The slogan "Free Palestine" in this context does not acknowledge these, and many other historical Israeli compromises, but rather promotes a false narrative of an intransigent Israel whose existence is illegitimate.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

By demanding a "free Palestine" without recognizing Israel's right to exist, this slogan perpetuates a one-sided view that fuels hostility and conflict, contributing to antisemitism and hindering the prospects for a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“RESISTANCE IS JUSTIFIED”

While the term "resistance" can be interpreted in various contexts, this chant often dangerously legitimizes Palestinian terrorism and attacks on Jewish people and institutions around the world, becoming inseparable from antisemitism.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The name of Hamas, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), is an Arabic acronym meaning "Islamic Resistance Movement." The political wing of Hezbollah, another U.S.-designated FTO, is called the "Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc" in Arabic, and Hezbollah serves as the "Islamic Resistance in Lebanon."



THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The use of "resistance" in this context glorifies violence committed by Hamas, Hezbollah, and other terrorist groups as legitimate acts. Following the October 7th massacre, this phrase justifies such violence against civilians as legitimate "resistance," rather than recognizing it as an act of terrorism.

GAZA "OPEN-AIR PRISON" COMPARISON



The phrase "open-air prison" is frequently used in protests, social media posts, and public discourse to describe the Gaza Strip. It is often paired with accusations comparing Gaza to a concentration camp.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

This comparison is factually inaccurate and ignores the complex realities of the situation in Gaza. In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza, removing settlements and military presence. Since then, Hamas has taken control of the territory, prioritizing military infrastructure over civilian welfare. Border restrictions, enforced by both Israel and Egypt, are intended to prevent the smuggling of weapons and materials used for terrorism. Despite these restrictions, Israel has issued thousands of work permits for Gazans and provided humanitarian aid, even during times of conflict.

Equating Gaza to a concentration camp is a form of Holocaust distortion, trivializing the systematic genocide of six million Jews. This analogy not only misrepresents the realities of Gaza but also minimizes the atrocities of the Holocaust, contributing to a false and inflammatory narrative.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The "open-air prison" comparison incites hostility against Israel by falsely portraying it as a perpetrator of mass oppression. This rhetoric fuels antisemitism by delegitimizing Israel's security measures and ignoring the role of Hamas in perpetuating the hardships in Gaza. Additionally, equating Gaza to a concentration camp diminishes the historical significance of the Holocaust, offending Jewish communities and undermining education about one of history's greatest atrocities.

GENOCIDE ACCUSATION

The accusation that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza has gained traction in protests, media discourse, and social media posts.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The term genocide, as defined by the United Nations, refers to acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group. Israel's actions in Gaza do not meet this definition. The Israeli government has consistently taken measures to minimize civilian casualties, such as issuing warnings, leaflets, and evacuation notices prior to military operations targeting Hamas infrastructure.



The use of the term genocide in this context emerged from efforts by anti-Israel activists and organizations to equate Israel's defensive measures with historical atrocities, including the Holocaust.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The genocide accusation fuels antisemitic rhetoric by framing Israel as a uniquely evil state, likening its actions to some of history's worst crimes. This false narrative incites hostility against Jews globally, as it positions them as complicit in alleged atrocities. It has led to increased incidents of harassment, vandalism, and violence targeting Jewish individuals and institutions.

Moreover, equating Israeli security measures with genocide trivializes the term, undermines the historical significance of actual genocides, and distorts public understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“ZIONISM IS NAZISM” OR “ZIONAZIS”

The phrase “Zionism is Nazism” or terms like “Zionazis” appear in social media posts, graffiti, and protests. This slur is designed to equate Zionism—a movement advocating for Jewish self-determination—with Nazism, invoking inflammatory and offensive comparisons.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The slur combines “Zionism” and “Nazism” to delegitimize Zionism by falsely associating it with one of history’s most brutal regimes, responsible for the Holocaust and the extermination of six million Jews. These comparisons emerged in radical political rhetoric and have been amplified in online spaces, weaponizing the memory of the Holocaust to attack Jewish identity and statehood.



THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

This rhetoric not only distorts historical truth but also perpetuates antisemitic stereotypes, fueling hostility towards Jews and Zionists. It incites hatred by invoking the Holocaust in a way that trivializes its atrocities while targeting Jewish self-

determination. Such language contributes to an atmosphere of hostility, making Jewish individuals and communities feel unsafe.

Equating Zionism with Nazism is not only factually incorrect but also deeply offensive and antisemitic. It exploits the trauma of the Holocaust to attack Jews and their supporters, undermines legitimate Jewish aspirations for self-determination, and inflames hatred. This slur erodes meaningful dialogue and perpetuates division, increasing tensions and fostering a hostile environment for Jewish communities.

“ALL EYES ON RAFAH”



Underlying the hashtag “All Eyes on Rafah” is the libelous insinuation that the IDF’s operation against Hamas is instead a sustained effort to harm the Palestinians residing in Rafah.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

In May 2024, ahead of Israel’s looming operation in Rafah to destroy Hamas infrastructure and free hostages, an AI-generated image with the

hashtag #AllEyesOnRafah went viral on Instagram, where it was posted by over 47 million people as an Instagram story. The online campaign sought to deny Israel’s right to rescue and protect its citizenry. In hindsight, however, the IDF’s military activity in Rafah featured the lowest civilian casualties of any part of the war, with Israel providing humanitarian assistance and ensuring the evacuation of civilians from the combat zone prior to carrying out its objectives in Rafah.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

In the time since the campaign, Hamas executed six Israeli and American hostages in a tunnel under Rafah, and Rafah was where Israel tracked down and killed Yahya Sinwar, the head of Hamas who orchestrated the October 7th massacre, the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Accordingly, the #AllEyesOnRafah campaign served to distract from Hamas’ horrific crimes and as an attempt to prevent Israel from bringing Sinwar to justice.



“KHAYBAR KHAYBAR YA YAHUD”

An aggressive chant frequently heard at anti-Israel rallies in major cities and on college campuses since October 7th, features a rhyming Arabic couplet declaring: “Khaybar, Khaybar, Oh, Jews, the army of Muhammad will return!”

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The refrain refers to the Arabian oasis of Khaybar, which was inhabited by Jewish tribes for centuries. The chant’s message refers to a legend that Islam’s founding prophet massacred the Jews of Khaybar for their alleged betrayal. While there is no confirmed historical evidence for the supposed Khaybar massacre (likely a myth developed for political reasons long after Muhammad’s death), its mystique today inspires menacing chants. During the Second Intifada, Hamas pamphlets called on Palestinians to honor the “memory of Khaybar,” and during the Israel-Lebanon War of 2006, the terrorist organization Hezbollah named the rockets fired into Israel after Khaybar.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Accordingly, the Khaybar chant (which only gained popularity after the 1979 Iranian Revolution) is a deadly violent threat against Jewish populations not only in Israel but around the world. When protestors invoke “Khaybar” at rallies, they are calling for violent ethnic cleansing, even if they are doing so in a foreign language using non-Western allusions.



ISRAEL OCCUPATION FORCE (IOF)

Referring to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) as the "Israel Occupation Force" (IOF) is a tactic used to delegitimize Israel and undermine its right to self-defense.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

This terminology frames Israel as an illegitimate occupier rather than a sovereign state with the right to protect its citizens and borders. By labeling the IDF as an "occupation force," critics demand that Israel be viewed not as a nation defending itself against relentless terrorist threats but as an aggressor maliciously perpetuating an occupation.



THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

In anti-Israel discourse, the use of "IOF" is a hostile effort to shift the narrative and portray Israel's actions as inherently unjust and illegal, regardless of context. This biased framing denies Israel the same rights and duties accorded to every other nation to defend its citizens and maintain security.

By deliberately distorting the complex realities of the conflict, such rhetoric fuels polarization and hate that undermines Israel's international standing and endangers Jewish communities worldwide.



KEFFIYEH

The Palestinian keffiyeh, also known as the “kufiya” or “hatta,” is a traditional Middle Eastern headdress that has become a potent symbol of Palestinian nationalism, and its frequently seen at anti-Israel demonstrations.

FACTS & HISTORICAL ORIGINS

This terminology frames Israel as an illegitimate occupier rather than a sovereign state with the right to protect its citizens and borders. By labeling the IDF as an “occupation force,” critics demand that Israel be viewed not as a nation defending itself against relentless terrorist threats but as an aggressor maliciously perpetuating an occupation.

THREAT TO JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Many Jews view the keffiyeh as an indicator of hostility, given its use by individuals and groups who have committed acts of terror against Jewish and Israeli targets. While some may wear the keffiyeh purely as a cultural or fashion statement, its potent nationalist symbolism can lead to misunderstandings and offense, particularly in charged political environments.

