

Coronavirus Antisemitism Briefing n. 2 – 7 May 2020

The Coronavirus Briefings analyze the development of the antisemitic hate speech connected to the Coronavirus crisis. This project, managed by Sammy Eppel, political analyst, is a common effort of the Kantor Center and its partners around the world. Among the contributors of this briefing, special thanks to: SACC (Security And Crisis Centre) by the EJC (European Jewish Congress) and the Amcha Initiative (US).

Executive Summary

- The [UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief](#), Mr. Ahmed Shaheed, denounced antisemitic and racist hate speech related to the Coronavirus pandemic and called on states to adopt firm counter-measures.
- The Coronavirus pandemic has caused a rise in online expressions of conspiracy theories coupled with antisemitic views of Jewish domination.
- Israeli-related antisemitism includes forms of blood libel, falsely accusing Israel of infecting Palestinians in general and their prisoners in Israel in particular.
- In a number of cases, Islamist discourse has portrayed Zionists as plague-spreaders.

Anti-Israel discourse

- Anti-Israel activists exploit the Coronavirus crisis to formulate false accusations of Israel deliberately infecting Palestinian prisoners and to suggest that Israel is responsible for the pandemic that is affecting and will affect Palestinians.
- Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi, San Francisco State University, participated on April 23 in a [National Students for Justice in Palestine webinar](#) entitled "Campus Repression & the Fight for Palestinian Liberation," where she said (at 10:20-10:50), "The fact that Israeli interrogators actually infected Palestinian prisoners while they were torturing them with the COVID-19 is quite alarming."

Online antisemitism

- Online hate speech spreads conspiracy theories about the origin of the Coronavirus, including antisemitic accusations of Jews creating the virus. A [study conducted by the Moonshot company](#) shows that such conspiracy theories promote anti-system views as well as antisemitic views of Jewish domination.
- Online activists continue posting antisemitic caricatures depicting Jews as a disease, a virus, or the profiteers of the current crisis.

- As a recent [publication by the ADL](#) shows, Orthodox and Haredi communities in the U.S. are particularly targeted by online expressions of hatred, including accusations of diffusing the virus.

Islamist discourse

- Islamist views on the Coronavirus crisis include conspiracy theories against the U.S. and Israel. At times, Zionists and Jews are conflated to promote different ideas, including the one that Coronavirus is a divine punishment for their misdeeds.
- As [MEMRI reported](#), a Muslim cleric in the U.S. said that the Coronavirus is a godly damnation for humanity misdeeds, referring also to “Jewish usury.”