

Hate Campaign Against Israel: The International Al-Quds Day

The international Al-Quds Day (Jerusalem Day) was established in 1979 by the Iranian revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini as an anti-Zionist day of struggle for the "liberation of Jerusalem" and marks the annual propagandistic climax of the global hate campaign against Israel. The goal is racially motivated incitement against so-called "Zionist enemies." Anti-Semitic threats of annihilation against the Israeli nation state are explicitly articulated.

Dated to the last Friday of the fasting month of Ramadan, mobilizations are being made worldwide for decidedly anti-Israel protests in line with Iran's Islamist state doctrine. The guiding principle is the attempt to convince people of the Muslim faith in particular of their "religious duty" to fight against Israel and to spread Israel-related antisemitism worldwide.

The central enemy image of this propaganda campaign, which deliberately incites hatred and international hostility toward Israel, is "Zionism. The enemy ascriptions expressed there intend - with the help of racist ascriptions and anti-Semitic dehumanizations - to legitimize, prepare and glorify anti-Israel hate crimes.

For Israel is continually denigrated by the Iranian leadership as a "satanic" enemy and absolute evil. The anti-Semitic characterization of Israel as a death-bringing "virus" and a "cancer" to be eradicated accompanies active support for anti-Israel violence ruthlessly committed by terrorist armies (such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad) in the name of the "resistance" led largely by the Iranian "Al-Quds" brigades.¹

On the occasion of Al-Quds Day 2020, the current revolutionary leader Khamenei described the "struggle to liberate Palestine" as a "jihad in the sense of God".² In this openly jihadist call for violence to "liberate" all of "Palestine" completely and ultimately (quote: "from the river to the sea"), the anti-Israel will to annihilation that ideologically motivates the regime's aggressive expansionist and terrorist policy is repeatedly expressed in unmistakable terms.

Peaceful coexistence in the sense of the two-state solution is systematically denied by Iranian state propaganda. Finally, Khamenei continued in his Al-Quds speech, the "Zionist regime" is a "deadly cancer" that must be "uprooted and destroyed."³ **In view of these repeated statements, the campaign for the international Al-Quds Day must be understood as a propagandistic declaration of war by the Iranian leadership against Israel.**

Any assembly that recognizably refers to the international Al-Quds campaign and "adopts its content as its own" would therefore have to be banned in Berlin in the sense of the Freedom of Assembly Act, since here, in order to disturb the public peace, it is recognizably "incited to hatred against a national group described by racist attribution, religious group or group determined by its ethnic origin (...), or incited to violence or arbitrary measures" (VersFG BE §14).

Al-Quds Day in Berlin: part of Iran's international hate campaign

In Germany, there is open sympathy for the anti-Israel goals of the Iranian leadership, which are openly articulated in particular on Al-Quds Day. In this regard, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution speaks of a "circle of participants" in Germany consisting of persons "who in part publicly spread anti-Israeli, anti-Western and anti-Semitic slogans (...)".⁴

The Berlin Office for the Protection of the Constitution (VS) adds that the "organizers (...) of the "al-Quds" day in Berlin (...) are supporters of the Islamist theocracy of Shiite character in Iran" and that "a stringent anti-Semitic rhetoric of destruction against Israel" is part of the "Iranian state doctrine."⁵

In addition, it states: "Close to Iran is the "Islamic Community of Iranians in Berlin-Brandenburg e.V." (IGIBB) in Berlin. It is connected with the "Islamic Center Hamburg e.V." (IZH). The IZH in Hamburg is the most influential center of Shiite Muslims close to Iran in Germany (...) and is, next to the embassy, the most important representation of Iran. The head of the IZH is considered the representative of Iran's "revolutionary leader" in Germany and is appointed directly by him. Thus, the IZH has a key position in the propagation and enforcement of Iranian interests in Germany and Europe."⁶

Since 1993, this IZH has been monitored by the Hamburg VS. The latter also regularly reports on the participation of IZH functionaries at the Al-Quds Day in Berlin.⁷ The latest findings were summarized by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution in 2021 as follows: "The IZH is ideologically, organizationally and in terms of personnel an outpost of the Tehran regime": "(...) with the help of which the mission of the worldwide export of the "Islamic revolution", which is anchored in the Iranian constitution, is to be implemented".⁸

Accordingly, the Berlin "QUDS AG" advertises the Al-Quds Day organized by it as a "cult" event with "a revolutionary tradition" to which the "anti-Israeli character" constitutively belongs.⁹ The central ambition is declared to be "the liberation of Palestine" as a "symbol for the liberation of humanity from the yoke of the oppressors."¹⁰

The related glorification of Iran is, moreover, an essential component of the Berlin Al-Quds structures' self-portrayal. For example, Jürgen Grassmann¹¹ described the killed commander of the "Al-Quds" brigades (classified by the U.S. as a terrorist organization¹²) Qasem Soleimani as a martyr and him and his soldiers as "worthy role models" for the youth.¹³

The trivialization of Islamist terror and the dissemination of anti-Israeli positions in the context of an internationally recognizable hate campaign orchestrated by Iran should - especially in light of the findings of the Hamburg Office for the Protection of the Constitution on the IZH - be prevented with the help of Section 14 of the Berlin Freedom of Assembly Act and events on Al-Quds Day should be banned.

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Appendix: Further sources and links

Findings of German constitutional protection authorities:

Hamburg Office for the Protection of the Constitution:

- Constitutional Protection Report 2016 (July 2017): <https://www.hamburg.de/content-blob/8873924/38b7f14ba1da5dd3693b6b1a833d9c43/data/verfassungsschutzbericht-2016-lfv-hh.pdf>
- Iranian Islamists. Representatives of the Islamic Center Hamburg participated in the anti-Israel "Quds Day" in Berlin (11.06.2018): <https://www.hamburg.de/innenbehoerde/schlagzeilen/11197970/izh-al-quds-tag/>
- Verfassungsschutzbericht 2019 (Juli 2020): <https://www.hamburg.de/content-blob/13946590/12000712ec5e5c8726a4dbd4fa81263d/data/vsb-2019-buch.pdf>
- Verfassungsschutzbericht 2020 (Mai 2020): <https://www.hamburg.de/content-blob/14991526/3e2dd876b7bdb583760c184e74ad3e5/data/vsb-2020-online.pdf>
- IZH. Tehran regime outpost (16.07.2021): <https://www.hamburg.de/contentblob/15263774/e9cee39187a321fab70c4f5f24bfce85/data/izh-neue-erkenntnisse.pdf>

Constitutional Protection Berlin:

- 2019 Constitutional Protection Report (June 2020): <https://www.berlin.de/sen/inneres/verfassungsschutz/publikationen/verfassungsschutzberichte/verfassungsschutzbericht-2019.pdf>
- Constitutional Protection Report 2020 (January 2022): <https://www.berlin.de/sen/inneres/verfassungsschutz/publikationen/verfassungsschutzberichte/verfassungsschutzbericht-2020.pdf>

Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution:

- Constitutional Protection Report 2015: https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/publikationen/themen/sicherheit/vsb-2015.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=4
- Compendium of the BfV. Presentation of selected areas of work and objects of observation (December 2018): https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/allgemein/2018-12-kompendium-des-bfv-darstellung-ausgewaehelter-arbeitsbereiche-und-beobachtungsobjekte.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=11
- Antisemitism in Islamism (01.06.2019): https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/islamismus-und-islamistischer-terrorismus/2019-06-antisemitismus-im-islamismus.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=7
- Situation report on antisemitism (01.07.2020): https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/allgemein/2020-07-lagebild-antisemitismus.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=11
- Constitutional Protection Report 2020 (15.06.2021): <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/verfassungsschutzberichte/2021-06-verfassungsschutzbericht2020.html>

Comments by Iranian Revolutionary Leader Ayatollah Khamenei on International Al-Quds Day:

- The "virus of Zionism" won't last long and will be eliminated (22.05.2020): <https://english.khamenei.ir/news/7570/The-virus-of-Zionism-won-t-last-long-and-will-be-eliminated>
- "I tell you with confidence: The downward movement of the Zionist regime has started and it will not stop" (07.05.2021): <https://english.khamenei.ir/news/8477/I-tell-you-with-confidence-The-downward-movement-of-the-Zionist>

Analyses of actors, organizational structures and content of "Al-Quds" events:

- Moussavi, Kazem (02.06.2017) - Iran's antisemitism and the organizational structures of the Al-Quds marches in Berlin: <http://iraniansforum.com/eu/der-antisemitismus-des-iran-und-die-organisationsstrukturen-der-al-quds-marsche-in-berlin/>
- Al-Quds March participants 2019: Iranian IAD in Hamburg may close: <http://iraniansforum.com/eu/al-quds-marsch-teilnehmer-2019-iranische-iad-in-hamburg-wird-womoglich-schliessen/>
- Federal Association of Research and Information Centers on Antisemitism (06/06/2019) - Qudstag March 2019 Evaluation: https://report-antisemitism.de/documents/2019-06-06_rias-be_Monitoring_Quds-Tag-2019.pdf
- Mideast Freedom Forum Berlin (May 2020): Al Quds Day as an Anti-Semitic Mobilization of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a Threat to Security in Germany: [https://archiv.mid-eastfreedomforum.org/fileadmin/editors_de/Texte/MFFB - Fuer ein Verbot des Al Quds Tages.pdf](https://archiv.mid-eastfreedomforum.org/fileadmin/editors_de/Texte/MFFB_-_Fuer_ein_Verbot_des_Al_Quds_Tages.pdf)
- democ. Center of Democratic Contradiction (13.05.2021): Digital and on the Street: The Anti-Semitic Al-Quds Day in Germany 2021: <https://democ.de/artikel/der-antisemitische-al-quds-tag-in-deutschland-2021-digital-und-auf-der-strasse/>

Videos:

Short documentaries of the Al-Quds marches in Berlin:

- Jewish Forum (7.6.2016): Anti-Semitic Al-Quds March 2014 & 2015 in Berlin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBurzyxJ-2E>
- Jewish Forum (26.7.2016): Education for Hate - Al-Quds March 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHhdoFQ5JLI>
- Jewish Forum (24.06.2017): Hundreds at anti-Israel Al-Quds demonstration in Berlin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zB-uGgbhgeM>
- Jewish Forum (10.06.2018): Crowd at anti-Israel Al-Quds march in Berlin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLW1VnH1LGQ>
- Jewish Forum (01.06.2019): United against Israel: Antisemitic Al-Quds March in Berlin 2019: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Vgs0kEWwwA>

Livestreams for several hours on the Al-Quds marches in Berlin:

- Ruptly (23.06.2017): LIVE: Al Quds Day rally takes place in Berlin, counter demo expected: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DOJPZCUlps>
- Ruptly (09.06.2018): Live: Al-Quds Day rally and counter-rally take place in Berlin: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zd_EeNS118s

Video contributions to the online Qudstag 2021:

- Qudstag Berlin (08.05.2021): Palestine and General Soleimani - Contribution to Qudstag 2021: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uw0Xjv1BDkY>
- Qudstag Berlin (08.05.2021): What is going on in the Middle East ? - Contribution to Qudstag 2021: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUfBodnqQz0>

All internet pages mentioned here were last accessed on 28.02.2022.

¹ The Middle East expert of the "Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik" Guido Steinberg characterizes the role of the Al-Quds Army as follows: "The mission of the Quds Corps is (...) to identify and build ideological and military allies for the "axis of resistance" and to support them in the long term with advice, training, leadership and money." In this sense, the "Quds Corps" is not only a "military unit" but also "a hybrid structure that uses military-terrorist, intelligence, and political means." Cf. https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/studien/2021S08_Achse_Widerstand.pdf

² Own translation of the original official English translation: "The struggle to liberate Palestine is Jihad in the way of God, and it is an obligation and an Islamic goal." Cf.:

<https://english.khamenei.ir/news/7570/The-virus-of-Zionism-wont-last-long-and-will-be-eliminated>

³ English original translation: "The Zionist regime is a deadly, cancerous growth and a detriment to this region. It will undoubtedly be uprooted and destroyed." Cf. source in footnote 2.

⁴ See page 222 in the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution's 2020 report:

https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/verfassungsschutzberichte/2021-06-verfassungsschutzbericht-2020.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=8

⁵ See page 120 in the 2019 Berlin Office for the Protection of the Constitution:

<https://www.berlin.de/sen/inneres/verfassungsschutz/publikationen/verfassungsschutzberichte/verfassungsschutzbericht-2019.pdf>)

⁶ See page 121 in the 2019 Berlin Report on the Protection of the Constitution.

⁷ Cf.: <https://www.hamburg.de/innenbehoerde/schlagzeilen/11197970/izh-al-quds-tag/>

⁸ Cf.: <https://www.hamburg.de/contentblob/15263774/e9cee39187a321fab70c4f5f24bfee85/data/izh-neue-erkenntnisse.pdf>

⁹ Cf. <http://www.qudstag.de/qudstag-2020-pressemitteilung/>

¹⁰ Cf. <https://www.qudstag.de/unsere-ambition/>

¹¹ Grassmann is a key player in Berlin's Al-Quds Day and announced in 2018, among other things, that "we do not accept the right of a Zionist regime of injustice to exist." Cf. <https://report-antisemitism.de/media/18-06-14-Auswertung-des-Qudstag-Marsches-2018.pdf>

¹² Cf. <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/iran/>

¹³ Cf. <http://www.qudstag.de/palaestina-und-general-soleimani-beitrag-zum-qudstag-2021/>