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'We'll hunt and catch the cemetery desecrators'

French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner arrives Friday at Jewish cemetery near Strasbourg, 'expressing disgust at terrible act.'

Contact Editor Yoni Kempinski, 16/12/18 10:22



Courtesy: DNA News, CNN, Elizabeth Sherer French officials with Rabbi Weil at cemetery

French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner Friday at the Harlesheim Jewish cemetery near Strasbourg that was desecrated last Monday.

"We are appalled at the criminal act of desecration of a Jewish cemetery by wrongdoers who don't hesitate in any way to harm the Jews and the wonderful fabric of relations between Jews and their neighbors in France. On behalf of the French government and the Interior Ministry, I promise that we will hunt and catch the criminals who committed the abominable act," said Minister Castaner, who participated in a solidarity rally held at the site.

The desecration occurred on Monday night, hours before the massacre committed by a terrorist in the streets of Strasbourg, when swastikas were spray-painted on 37 gravestones and graffiti against French President Emmanuel Macron was written on the cemetery walls.

During the week, the rabbi of Strasbourg and the Lower Rhine region of France visited Conference of European Rabbis Permanent Committee member Rabbi Avraham Weil and heads of the community. Only after the terrorist was captured did security forces allow Rabbi Weil and the community leaders to hold a protest rally and pray in the desecrated cemetery.

Hundreds of Strasbourg Jewish community members from surrounding areas and local residents arrived on Friday to denounce the actions and express their support for the Jewish community. French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner also participated in the rally, along with representative of the Government for the Greater Middle East - Grand Est, Jean-Luc

Marks of the Parliament and the City Council, the Mayor of Strasbourg, head of the district, representatives of the police and the municipality, and many public figures.

After prayers and asking forgiveness from the departed, Rabbi Weil spoke. He thanked Interior Minister Castaner, members of parliament, and the district heads for their participation and support, "especially since we're in a difficult period for France in general and dealing with the terror attack in Strasbourg. We expect significant steps on the part of the French government against anti-Semitic acts, and not to make do with statements, as important as they may be."

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