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1/2



Top European rabbis say religious practice under 'severe threat'

Warning sounded by CER President Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt in Geneva this week, over the 'increasingly worrying and problematic' attempts to restrict Jewish customs and freedoms

By JEWISH NEWS REPORTER

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CER president Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt speaking at an event in Geneva. (picture credit: Eli Itkin)

European Rabbis have said religious practice is under "severe threat" right across the continent, in the sternest warning of its kind in years.

The remarks were made in Geneva this week at a meeting of the Conference of European Rabbis (CER) to discuss Jewish life in the region.





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CER president Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt said: “Everywhere in Europe, our religious practice is severely under threat. The continued efforts made by several European nations to restrict our ability to observe important religious customs and traditions are increasingly worrying and problematic.”

It follows the recent ban on non-stun slaughter in two Belgian regions of Belgium and a challenge to non-medical infant circumcision in Iceland, with the possibility of similar moves in Sweden, France and Germany.

“The importance of protecting Jewish life in Europe is of the utmost importance within today’s political and social climate,” said Goldschmidt. “The future of the Jews in Europe is once again thrown into question. Many are experiencing huge anxiety about whether they are able to continue living on this continent.”

Among the guests were Michael Wiener and Chian Yew Lim, human rights officers from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.



The CER meeting in Geneva (picture credit: Eli Itkin)

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