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'Circumcision ban will end Jewish communities in Europe'

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, President of CER, says that Jews in Europe are 'collateral damage' of Muslim immigration.

Contact Editor Yoni Kempinski, 01/12/19 18:53



Arutz Sheva spoke with Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, President of the Conference of European Rabbis (CER), at a [gathering of its Standing Committee](#) in Geneva, Switzerland.

How more challenging and scary has being a Jew in Europe become?

"It's very challenging, as an individual and as a community."

You're referring to fears of anti-Semitism?





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"Yes. We witnessed an attack on Yom Kippur in eastern Germany, not ISIS - Neo-Nazis. In the last years, no Jews were killed by neo-Nazis in Europe. It's a whole new phenomenon."

"We have problems today from the left and the right and the center. This is beside the attacks on religious freedom, against *shechita* (ritual slaughter) and *bris milah* (circumcision)."

And is there anything that could be done? It seems like it's a phenomenon for generations of course.

"We're there and we're fighting. We're fighting but sometimes it's not an easy fight. The main thing is to get support from our communities and from our allies."

Do you think that some countries will really legislate against *shechita* and *bris milah*? Or is it just declarations?

"No. It's a real problem. If we don't do anything, it's possible that in many countries in Europe, *bris milah* will be forbidden and then that's the end of an organized Jewish community in those cities and countries.

"We're seeing that the Muslim world is also opposing this legislation. Maybe you can say that the Jews and Muslims are on the same side on this point.

"We may be collateral damage. We Jews lived in Europe for over a thousand years and no one said a word about *bris milah*. It is only because of the immigration of millions and millions of people from the Middle East that we have problems today. We are the collateral damage."

But although it's coming from them, do you feel that there should be cooperation and coordination?

"We have to have a dialogue, we have to cooperate, yes."

In terms of what should be done, what are your demands from the governments in these countries?

"Many Europeans say 'Europe without Jews is not Europe. France without Jews is not France.' Okay, so do something about it. If you declare that and in the same moment you say: 'We're not going to allow the Jews to eat meat. We're not going to allow the Jews to practice





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their religion,' so basically it's fake news."

Let's end with the state of Israel. What is the role of the state of Israel in this challenge?

"First of all, get your act together. Get yourself a government."

And what else? Do you feel there should be a role?

"Yes, there's a position - the Minister of Diaspora Affairs. The person chosen for this ministry should be a person who takes an interest in this."

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