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1/3



Disturbing Images Emerge of Astounding Antisemitism at Belgian Carnival

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2



Publication: Matzav (online)
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2/3



Disturbing images emerged on Sunday of the annual



carnival at Aalst, Belgium, showing an astounding number of antisemitic themes, costumes, displays and statements.

Israeli journalist Raphael Ahren documented people dressed as caricatures of Orthodox Jews, a fake "wailing wall" attacking critics of the parade, blatantly antisemitic characters and puppets wearing traditional Jewish clothes and sporting huge noses.

There was also video of attendees dressed in exaggerated imitations of clothing worn by Hasidic Jews with insect legs attached to their torsos.

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference

of European Rabbis, condemned the march in a statement, saying, "The satirical procession with antisemitic tropes in Aalst, Belgium are extremely offensive and abuse the power of free speech which is such an essential ingredient in any liberal democracy."





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3/3



“What is worse is that this type of antisemitism is a reminder of some of the darker moments of Europe’s past: we have not seen Jews labelled with a yellow Star of David since the 1930s,” he said. “We cannot pretend that these images are some kind of joke or do not cause fear. It is simply not acceptable for world leaders such as the King of Belgium to declare ‘never again’ one week and then sit idly by when these symbols appear on their streets just weeks later.”

“After last year’s international protests against antisemitic motifs in the Aalster street carnival ... the organizers should have realized that precisely such antisemitic motifs contribute to the resurgence of antisemitism in Europe,” Goldschmidt asserted.

Israel’s Ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, also condemned the march and its “demonization of the Jewish people.”

As The Algemeiner reported on Thursday, the carnival is an annual event rooted in medieval times and was recognized in 2010 by UNESCO — the UN’s cultural and educational agency — as belonging to the “Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.” Last year, that status was revoked over what UNESCO condemned as a “recurring repetition of racist and antisemitic representations.”

The carnival’s last outing, in March 2019, included a float with two giant figures of observant Jews depicted as caricatures with side curls and large noses, sitting on large bags of money. Another float featured dancers wearing the full regalia of the Ku Klux Klan, while other puppets on display crudely mocked black people. Dozens of revelers were spotted wearing “blackface.”

Past carnivals have included a float that featured individuals dressed as Nazi SS officers alongside individuals dressed as Orthodox Jews, with a display of canisters labeled “Zyklon B” — the deadly poison gas used by the Nazis at the Auschwitz death camp.

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