

Publication: DW (online)
Date: 23.02.2020
1/5



Belgian Carnival parade of anti-Semitic tropes goes ahead despite criticism

Israel urged Belgium to ban the traditional Carnival parade, which featured floats depicting caricaturistic images of Orthodox Jews. The mayor of Aalst defended the festivities, saying "it is not an anti-Semitic parade."



The Belgian city of Aalst went ahead with its traditional Carnival parade on Sunday, despite [calls from Israel to ban the event](#) over its anti-Semitic floats and costumes.





Publication: DW (online)
Date: 23.02.2020
2/5

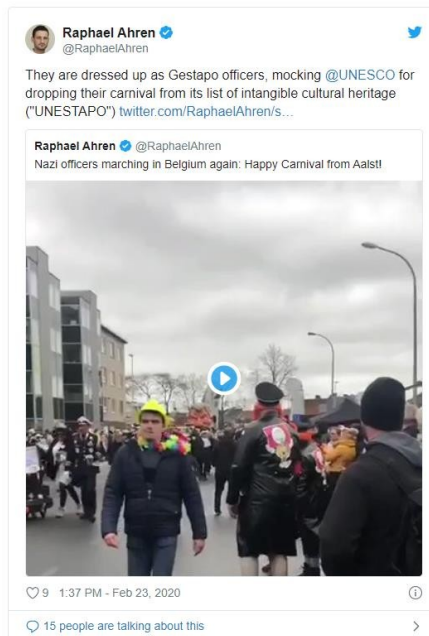


This year's parade included participants dressed in costumes of caricaturistic Jewish stereotypes, with some wearing hooked noses, insect costumes, and exaggerated outfits meant to depict Orthodox Jews. One of the floats also included three Jewish caricatures placed alongside gold bars. Some revellers were also dressed in costumes meant to represent Nazi officers.

Lawmakers in the European Parliament had urged officials in Aalst to make sure this year's parade was free from "manifestations of hatred."

Earlier this week, Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz called on the Belgian government to ban the "hate-filled" parade altogether.

The city's Carnival parade lost its UNESCO cultural heritage status last year over the "recurrence of racist and anti-Semitic representation." Revelers then dressed in Nazi costumes, making fun of the move.





Publication: DW (online)
Date: 23.02.2020
3/5



Mayor defends parade

The city's mayor dismissed criticism and calls for a ban on the festivities, saying "let Aalst be Aalst."

"This is not an anti-Semitic parade," Mayor Christoph D'Haese told reporters on Sunday. "Aalst is not an anti-Semitic city."

US Holocaust Museum  
@HolocaustMuseum

24K Jews living in #Belgium were murdered in the Holocaust. Today, deadly #antisemitism is on the rise again throughout Europe. Events like the #AalstCarnaval parade that promote antisemitism and stoke hatred and potentially violence must be denounced by all segments of society. twitter.com/JewishChron/st...

The Jewish Chronicle  @JewishChron
Belgian parade featuring big-nosed Jews set to include even more antisemitic effigiestinyurl.com/whtbnuw



 1,526  2:10 PM - Feb 23, 2020 

 944 people are talking about this 



Publication: DW (online)

Date: 23.02.2020



4/5 D'Haese, of the right-wing nationalist New Flemish Alliance party, added that the goal of the parade is "not to hurt anyone."

City authorities have repeatedly defended the parade as an expression of free speech and saying the costumes and floats are intended to be "satirical."

The US Holocaust Museum tweeted "24,000 Jews living in Belgium were murdered in the Holocaust. Today, deadly anti-Semitism is on the rise again throughout Europe. Events like the Aalst Carnaval parade that promote anti-Semitism and stoke hatred and potentially violence must be denounced by all segments of society."



One of this year's floats featured Orthodox Jews next to gold bars

Sunday's parade in Aalst also took place despite the threat of strong winds gusting up to 100 kilometers per hour (62 mph). Several other Belgian cities postponed or canceled their parades due to the severe weather.





Publication: DW (online)
Date: 23.02.2020
5/5



The Aalst Carnival celebrations, which are more than 600 years old, were given UNESCO cultural heritage status in 2010. Last year's parade prompted a wave of criticism from the EU and from Jewish groups after a float included Jewish caricatures with bags of money that were surrounded by rats.

According to the World Jewish Congress, Belgium is home to a small Jewish community of around 30,000 people out of the country's total population of 11 million.

<https://www.dw.com/en/belgian-carnival-parade-of-anti-semitic-tropes-goes-ahead-despite-criticism/a-52490668>

