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# JEWISH News

## Jewish and Muslim leaders unite ahead of hearing into Belgian kosher-halal ban

Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt and Shiekh Dr Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa issue joint statement saying it would not be justified to stop faiths practicing religious slaughter

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Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, and Shiekh Dr Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, secretary-general of the Muslim World League and president of Muslim Scholars Organisation.



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Senior Jewish and Muslim leaders this week issued a joint plea ahead of a European Court of Justice hearing into the legality of a Belgian ban on religious slaughter.

Standing together on the issue were Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, and Shiekh Dr Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, secretary-general of the Muslim World League and president of Muslim Scholars Organisation.

The pair recalled how bans on religious slaughter had presaged violence against religious minorities in the past, as the court prepared to weigh measures adopted by Belgium's Flanders and Wallonia regions.

“Food plays an important role in our religious life and how we prepare food represents a key tenet of our faiths,” they said. “Throughout history, bans on the religious slaughter of animals for food have been used to try to limit the migration of individuals from certain religious groups.

“The first such ban on religious methods of animal slaughter for food occurred in Switzerland as a response to Jews fleeing the pogroms of Russia during the nineteenth century. Similar bans were introduced in the lead up to World War II, marginalising Jewish communities across Europe.”

They said that today Muslims were increasingly the targets of such legislation, with similar measures proposed by right-wing Dutch politicians angry about immigration.





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Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, and Sheikh Dr Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, secretary-general of the Muslim World League and president of Muslim Scholars Organisation.

“None of these bans are justified, whether they target the halal food, kosher food, or both, and any such ban violates core principles of what Europe should stand for,” they said.

“While freedom of religion is inscribed as a fundamental right throughout the democracies of Europe, it is meaningless without allowing individuals and communities the freedom to practice their religions.







Conference of  
European Rabbis

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“The court must take into account the historical intentions of such bans, and consider the precedent being set. If the Belgian bans are upheld, the message that the Court is sending to minority religious communities is clear: they are not welcome.”

<https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/jewish-and-muslim-leaders-unite-ahead-of-hearing-into-belgian-kosher-halal-ban/>

