

## 2014 ANTI-SEMITISM in GREECE

### Golden DAWN Activities

#### Follow up on the prosecution of Golden Dawn:

**Since January 2014**, the extended investigation on the crimes committed by GD members (charged with directing a criminal organization) resulted in more charges (including gun possession and ammunition) against more GD MPs and party members. **By June**, in a series of sessions, the Greek Parliament voted for the **lifting of the parliamentary immunity** of all Golden Dawn MPs. **By September** the **investigation was concluded** with **70 GD members accused** to stand trial, 29 of whom are imprisoned, 18 of whom are MPs including the party leader Nikos Michaloliakos. The trial is expected to begin by February 2015.

Nevertheless, and despite the stunning evidence brought to light on the criminal activity of GD, a poll published in October 2014 showed that Golden Dawn still holds the position of the third political power in Greece.

Anti-Semitic incidents did not stop with the crackdown on Golden Dawn (which initiated in October 2013)

Here under we register **anti-Semitic incidents** (in chronological order), the majority of which are related to Golden Dawn:

- **Anti-Semitic comments** made by journalist **Theodoris Karypidis** on his twitter page aroused strong criticism in the light of his candidacy for the Regional elections with the support of the main opposition party of the Left SYRIZA (Feb. 2013). Following international condemnation, as well as protest by the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, the party's political secretariat announced that Karypidis would no longer represent the party in the election. Yet, it is to be noted that Karypidis run at the elections of May as an independent candidate and was elected Governor of the region of Western Macedonia.

- On March 2, 2014 **a doctor was arrested in Thessaloniki** for having a sign outside his office reading "**Jews not welcome**". He was linked to Golden Dawn. He was convicted to a 16-month prison term with a 3 year suspension and a fine because he violated the anti-racism law.

- On April 4, 2014, the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece issued a condemning announcement after the political turmoil that burst out in relation to the video released by Golden Dawn MP Ilias Kasidiaris in which **Greek Government's secretary and top aide of Greek PM Samaras, Takis Baltakos, accused the PM of influencing the criminal investigation against the Golden Dawn**. In the video Baltakos, who was forced to resign immediately after the release of the video, during what appears to be a friendly conversation with Kasidiaris, inter alia, refers to the statement made by PM Samaras at the "American Zionist Conference" on the crackdown of Golden Dawn. With these disparaging words Baltakos referred to the speech

delivered by PM Samaras to the American Jewish Committee during his visit in the USA, on September 30, 2013.

\* Following general condemnation of Baltakos' relation with Golden Dawn, the homonymous "Golden Dawn" weekly, on its issue of April 9, 2014, accused the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece of "Governing Greece". The article reads: "The Central Board (KIS) ordered, Bobolas and DOL [media owners] drew the guidelines, the political parties obeyed - SYRIZA was the last to follow. So simply things are following the hierarchy of interlaced interests in Greece".

- **GD MP Mihalīs Arvanītis**, known for his frequent anti-Semitic and holocaust denial comments, during a session of the Parliamentary Ethics Committee discussing the lifting of his immunity (March 15, 2014), "revealed" that "Mossad is responsible for the murder of leftist musician Pavlos Fyssas".

- **GD MP Panagiotaros praised Hitler**: In an interview with Australia's "60 Minutes newsmagazine", which aired on Nine Network on April 10, 2014, Golden Dawn MP **Ilias Panagiotaros** said Hitler was a 'great personality' who was prepared to do the dirty work and did what had to be done. Ilias Panagiotaros said Hitler was a "great personality, like Stalin", adding that "in every period of time, there must be, there are some people who are doing the dirty job".

[http://www.enetenglish.gr/?i=news.en.article&id=1858&utm\\_source=EnetEnglish+general&utm\\_campaign=2b4a1e12ec-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_2d5bc1ed1e-2b4a1e12ec-23746625](http://www.enetenglish.gr/?i=news.en.article&id=1858&utm_source=EnetEnglish+general&utm_campaign=2b4a1e12ec-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_2d5bc1ed1e-2b4a1e12ec-23746625)

- **GD MP Christos Pappas "educates" the children**: In the video clip, published by Kathimerini, (Sunday edition of Sept. 21, 2014), GD deputy leader Christos Pappas is displayed instructing young children on how to chant "Heil Hitler" and give the Nazi salute. Pappas can be heard encouraging a young boy, dressed in a traditional Greek costume and wearing a swastika armband, to say "Heil Hitler" while holding a small Nazi flag.

- **GD MP Artemis Mathaiopoulos** in his speech of November 13, 2014, during a session in the Parliament accused the "**Zionist lobby**" together with the "German loan sharks" of being responsible for the prosecution of his party.

### **ELECTIONS of MAY 2014**

With regard to the **Municipal and European Parliament Elections (May 2014)**, strong skepticism aroused in Greece at large and in our community specifically.

#### **- GD in the Elections :**

Early enough Golden Dawn had established a new surrogate party called "National Dawn" which was going to take GD's place in the elections should the party was banned by prosecutor's order.

Golden Dawn's candidates for the Municipalities included Ilias Kasidiaris for Athens (the man who has a swastika tattoo in his arm and has read excerpts from the Protocols in the Parliament) and Artemis Mathaiopoulos for

Thessaloniki (the man who in the past was a member of an anti-Semitic hate rock band).

**In the Municipalities and Regional Governments** Golden Dawn elected an increased number of City Councils. For example, in Athens and Thessaloniki Municipalities and Regional Governments together GD has gained **15 seats**.

**In the EU elections** of May 25, 2014, Golden Dawn took the 9,41% of the vote, elected 3 MEPs, and steadily held the 3rd position, regardless criminal charges against its leadership, brutal racist and violent attitude of its members and rejection from political leaders and the media.

Golden Dawn is one of the very few political powers in Greece that have increased their showings, either compared to the general national elections of June 2012 (when GD had reached the 6,79%), or to the EU elections of 2009, when GD had taken the 0,46%.

#### **- LAOS in the Elections:**

The far right party of LAOS (Popular Orthodox Rally) of George Karatzaferis won the **2,7%** of the vote and, though it did not make it to the European Parliament, its power -if added to the almost 10% of Golden Dawn- is indicative of the rise of ultra nationalism in Greece. LAOS lost the 2 seats it held in the EU Parliament (with the 7,15% it had taken in 2009), yet it has increased its showings in relation to the national elections of June 2012. It is also worth to mention that Karatzaferis used anti-Semitic propaganda in his electoral campaign leaflet. The leaflet reads: ***“G. Karatzaferis does not bow, does not compromise, is not controlled by: - The Americans, The Turks, The Skopjans, The Jews, The Oligarches. Wake up now!”***.

#### **VANDALISM – Graffiti:**

\* **Thessaloniki Jewish Cemetery:** On May 30, 2014, the Jewish cemetery in Thessaloniki was vandalized. Damages were limited to a few broken plant vases and marble tomb decorations. The local Jewish Community as well as the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece issued condemnation and protest announcements.

\* **Athens Holocaust Monument:** On June 27, 2014, vandals desecrated the Holocaust Monument in Athens using anti-Semitic and threatening graffiti. The police immediately reached the site and started investigation. Apart from Jewish reactions, condemnation statements were issued by the Vice President of the Government and FM, as well as by the General Secretary for Religions of the Ministry of Education.

\* **Ioannina Jewish Cemetery:** On the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, 2014, six youngsters were apprehended after having entered the Jewish cemetery. They did not do any damage. Police filed a report and the Jewish Community’s representative were called in. No charges were pressed against them.

\* **Larissa Jewish Cemetery:** On September 7, the façade of the surrounding wall of the Jewish cemetery of Larissa, next to the main gate, was desecrated with Swastikas and “Heil Hitler” graffiti.

\* **Volos, road to Goritsa hill:** On October 20, graffiti reading “*Jews murderers*” and “*Smash the Jews*” appeared on the road leading from the city of Volos to the hill of Goritsa. It was immediately erased by the local authorities.

\* **Athens Holocaust Monument:** On October 30, 2014, the Holocaust Monument in Athens was for the second time desecrated with anti-Semitic graffiti signed by the extreme nationalist and anti-Semitic organization “Unaligned Meander Nationalists” (Greek abbreviation: AME).

It is to be noted that the Greek Government as well as the political parties issued announcements of strong condemnation of this vandal act. It is also worthy of mention that the AME organization –which declares to be a hardcore radical and nationalist organization and separates itself from “moderate nationalists” of Golden Dawn- has also signed the desecration of the Holocaust Monument in the island of Rhodes in October 2012.

\* **Larissa Jewish Cemetery:** On December 23, 2014, the Jewish cemetery of Larissa was vandalized (for the second time in 2014) with anti-Semitic graffiti reading “*Juden raus*” and “*six million more*”, signed by “Larissa Skins”. Government and all political parties condemned the attack.

### **GAZA CRISIS July - August**

#### **ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS DURING OPERATION “PROTECTIVE EDGE”**

**No violent anti-Semitic incidents against Jewish targets** and/or individuals have been reported in Greece during the conflict in Gaza (July – August 2014) and the Israeli operation “Protective Edge”.

The initially strong anti-Israel feeling, mainly expressed in the mass media at large, has gradually turned into anti-Semitic by “blaming the Jews of Greece for not having spoken against the genocide of the Palestinian people” and -in some cases- into ‘justifying’ (!) recent anti-Semitic acts in European countries as deriving from the “zionist crimes”.

#### **Some characteristic anti-Semitic headlines in the Greek Press:**

- **ELEFTHEROS KOSMOS, July 17, 2014: “220 dead in Gaza! Yet, KIS issued an announcement condemning the Palestinians!”**

The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS) was criticized for the announcement issued on the situation in the Middle East (July 16, 2014).

[ <http://www.elkosmos.gr/epikairoτητα/h-/kathimerinotita/14385--220-----html> ]

-The leftist daily “**AVGHI**” (July 22, 2014) dedicated its front page to Gaza conflict with a photo from a bombarded site in Gaza and a headline that reads “**Gaza like Guernica**”.

- **ELEFTHEROTYPIA, (August 3, 2014), Takis Fotopoulos: “The brutalization of international new order”.**

Some quotes: “a first-ever slaughter even for the criminal Zionist standards” [...] “thus, the rise of anti-Semitism -for which the Zionists around the world whinge and deviously identify with antizionism- is to be almost exclusively accredited to the Zionist crimes against humanity throughout these years”.

<http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.politikh&id=441993>

- **ELEFTHEROTYPIA, (August 5, 2014), Giorgos Tzedakis: “The silence of the Greek Jews over the Palestinian genocide is loud [...]** and those who are not silent, they speak of anti-Semitism that exists in Greece as well [...]. So, if they consider us to be antisemites because we denounce their crimes and stand by the side of their innocent victims, well, then yes, we are!

- **EFIMERIDA TON SYNTAKTON, July 30, 2014, Petros Pizanias, “Antisemitism”.** An article which diminishes Holocaust history, draws parallels between Nazi methods and Israel, as well as between anti-Nazi Resistance fighters and the Hamas fighters, and confuses boundaries between political criticism and anti-Semitism.

### **Some characteristic anti-Semitic attitudes related to the GAZA conflict:**

- **Antisemitic post:** A university professor of the (Aristoteleion University of Thessaloniki) posted an anti-Semitic comment on an on line academic dialogue platform, reading “Gaza slaughter made by dirty soaps!!!”. Our Board wrote a letter of protest to the Dean of the University, who immediately responded condemning the fact and clarifying that the University will strongly react as soon as it re-opens, after summer. In September, the offending professor sent a letter of apologies which was posted on line by the university. The offender was excluded from the university’s on line dialogue platform.

- **Theatrical act in front of the Thessaloniki Holocaust Monument (July 28, 2014):** a theatrical one-act play, interpreted by artists and educators, was improvised in front of the Holocaust Monument of Thessaloniki, under a banner reading “**Gaza – Holocaust 2014**”. The act presented Gaza strip as a concentration camp and the Israelis as the Nazis.

- **Graffiti** (Aug. 2014): Graffiti reading “**Israel – USA, You have no excuse**”, with the letter ‘**S**’ depicted as a swastika, appeared on buildings of the central Kifissias Avenue, in Athens, near the US Embassy. [It was erased following our Board’s intervention with the Municipality of Athens].

### **\*\* Attack against the Embassy of Israel:**

A terrorist attack against the Embassy of Israel in Athens took place at 3:15 a.m. on December 12, 2014, when four men riding two motorcycles sprayed 54 bullets from two AK-47 rifles at the embassy building in Psychico, a northern Athens suburb. The Greek Police counter-terrorism has run ballistic tests that show the two rifles are the same ones that shot at the residence of the German Ambassador in Greece on December 30, 2013. A group called People’s Fighters Group had claimed responsibility for the attack and two similar attacks in 2014.

## **ATTITUDES – The “Independent Greeks” party:**

**\*\* MP Stavroula Xoulidou** of the **“Independent Greeks”** right-wing party, includes anti-Semitic prejudices and stereotypes in her essay entitled ‘Philhellenes, Greek-haters, Ant-Hellenes’ –in which more or less she attributes the blame for all hardships of Greece and the Greeks in contemporary history to the World Zionist Movement. This was revealed in a press article published on the mainstream newspaper “Ethnos” (Nov. 30, 2014).

**\*\* The leader of the “Independent Greeks” party Panos Kammenos** in an interview on the Antenna television channel (of December 15, 2014) stated that the Greek Jews don’t pay taxes.

## **NEW ANTI-RACISM LEGISLATION**

After a long period of political debate, on September 9, 2014, the Greek Parliament voted for the new antiracism bill, which will replace law 927 into force in Greece since 1979.

The bill under the general title “Fight against Xenophobia” conforms with the European Council Framework Decision of 2008 and it stipulates jail terms of up to three years and large fines for those who incite attacks against people based on their race, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation. Similar treatment is foreseen for individuals who publicly deny genocides and other crimes against humanity that are recognised by the Greek Parliament and international courts.

## **CHURCH:**

- Metropolitan Bishop of Piraeus Seraphim (known for his anti-Semitic attitudes), in an encyclical letter dated July 29, 2014, blamed “the Zionist lobby of the USA” for the ongoing genocide of the Christian populations in North Africa and Middle East.

- Metropolitan Bishop of Gortynia Ieremias in a “Letter to the Jews who deny to have crucified Jesus”, (published in the weekly “Neoi Anthropoi” on May 2, 2014), refers to “the Jews and the Judaists” as enemies and calls them “snakes surrounding the Christian faith”.

- The same Metropolitan Ieremias, in August 2014, addressed a letter to Greek PM Samaras protesting against the new antiracism legislation which was voted by the Parliament.

- Metropolitan Bishop Ambrosios of Kalavryta in his official blogspot, in his post of Oct. 15, wrote that “foreign powers (Zionism and Merkel) rule our country” and again on Oct. 27, the same Metropolitan Ambrosios stated that there is a “Global Government of Zionist (meaning Masonic and Jewish) orientation...” and encouraged his readers to read the “Protocols”: “...Those of

you who have the chance to search for and study the book entitled ‘Protocols of the Elders of Zion’ will have a lot to learn...”

On December 19, 2014, in his encyclical, Metropolitan Ambrosios blamed “Zionism” and the “Jewish Lobby” as responsible for the “Globalization” that “aims at destroying Christian Greece”.

Updated: December, 2014

The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece