

Sharon Nazarian's Testimony before a Joint House Committee Hearing on White Nationalist Terrorism Home and Abroad



Remarks by Sharon Nazarian, Senior Vice President for International Affairs, ADL

Washington, D.C., September 18, 2019

Good afternoon Chairmen Deutch and Rose, Ranking Members Wilson and Walker, and members of the subcommittees. My name is Sharon Nazarian, I serve as Senior Vice President for International Affairs at the Anti-Defamation League. It is an honor to appear before you today.

I am here today to speak to you about the internationalization and increasing interconnectedness of white supremacist ideology around the world, which aims to dehumanize, threaten, and eradicate whole communities. White supremacy is a transnational terrorist threat that has already begun to engulf us all. Of the extremist-related domestic murders in the U.S. in 2018, ADL has determined that 78% were perpetrated by white supremacists.

The threat of homegrown terrorism inspired by Islamist extremist propaganda remains clear and present. In recent years, however, we have seen an increase in other types of violent extremism, and our government has failed to take sufficient measures to also address this rising threat.

While white supremacists use various euphemisms to describe themselves, including white nationalist, race realist and identitarian, there should be no uncertainty that the perpetrators of these attacks and the ideological community that inspires them are hateful supremacists.

Over the past eight years, more than 175 people have died at the hands of white supremacists worldwide. There is a through line from Charlottesville to Pittsburgh, to Christchurch, Poway, and El Paso. The Christchurch killer who slaughtered over 50 innocent people cited in his manifesto Dylann Roof and Norwegian white supremacist Anders Breivik, who had perpetrated their own white supremacist terror attacks in 2011 and 2015. The Christchurch shooter in turn was cited as inspiration by the attackers at Poway, El Paso, and an attempted shooting at a mosque recently in Norway.

In a report ADL released today titled: *Hate Beyond Borders: The Internationalization of White Supremacy*, we detail this phenomenon. These findings are a result of collaboration between researchers at ADL's Center on Extremism and extremism researchers at the Amadeu Antonio Foundation in Germany, the Community Security Trust in the UK, Expo Foundation in Sweden, The Observatory of Political Radicalism in France, and the Never Again Association in Poland. The report chronicles the deepening ties between extremists in Europe and their white supremacist counterparts in America.

The internet has increased the global interconnectedness of white supremacists, helping to accelerate their movement's deadly impact. The internet also offers community: while most extremists are unaffiliated with organized groups, online forums allow isolated extremists to become more radicalized and dangerous.

The most extreme forms of online content thrive on under-regulated message boards like 8chan, Gab, and 4chan, but larger social media platforms need to remain vigilant as well.

There is a lot more that the U.S. government can do to address this threat, and we must start with leaders using their bully pulpit.

The president, cabinet officials, and Members of Congress must call out white supremacy at every opportunity – and have a responsibility not to engage in the scapegoating of vulnerable groups. You cannot say it enough that America is no place for hate.

ADL endorses several pieces of legislation that would help as well, including the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act, the DATA Act, the NO HATE Act, and the Disarm Hate Act.

In addition, Congress can strengthen laws against perpetrators of online misconduct, and it can encourage online forums to implement more robust governance against cyberhate.

Finally, Congress and the State Department should closely examine whether it would be appropriate and effective to sanction certain white supremacist groups operating abroad if they meet the State Department's criteria for Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Several countries, such as Canada and the UK, have already added specific violent white supremacist groups to their terrorism lists.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for calling a hearing on this topic.

We must act swiftly, decisively and comprehensively to counter this threat and prevent it from metastasizing. On behalf of the ADL, we look forward to working with you as you continue to devote your urgent attention to the issue.

<https://www.adl.org/news/article/sbaron-nazarians-testimony-before-a-joint-house-committee-hearing-on-white-nationalist>