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Date: 2015-04

Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt

 [Rabbin Goldschmit & pope site.jpg](#)

Pinchas Goldschmidt is the chief rabbi of Moscow and chairman of the Brussels-based Standing Committee of the Conference of European Rabbis, representing some 800 Jewish religious leaders in over 40 European states.

Post

Your Holiness, Your Eminences, dear Colleague Chief Rabbis, dear Members of the Board of Patrons of the CER.

Your Holiness in his homilies has spoken of the God of Surprises, a notion of God, which has also been requested to me by my teacher Rabbi Soloveitchik, The God, who unexpectedly carries his will and salvation to humanity through least expected emissaries. The fact that we are meeting today in a historical context is also to celebrate a surprise.

This year 2015 we celebrate fifty years of Nostra Aetate with the declaration that the Church, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved by political reasons, but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone. Nostra Aetate marked a new beginning in the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people.

50 years is a full cycle and is described in the Word of God as "leolam" as forever, a word signifying an eternity, which is included in the passing of a Jubilee cycle. And we are today grateful to the honor accorded to us, to celebrate this monumental jubilee in the presence of Your Holiness; and celebrate also all further advances in the relationship between our religions, including the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel.

The world moved beyond Nostra Aetate when Your Holiness stated in 2013 in Evangelii Gaudium, that "We Christians should embrace with affection and respect Muslim immigrants to our countries" and Your Holiness asked that "Muslim countries grant Christians freedom to worship and to practice their faith, in light of the freedom which followers of Islam enjoy in Western countries"

I would be not overly dramatic if I would describe that many Jews in Europe feel themselves as Christians in the Middle East, even though the governments of Europe have taken steps to protect their Jews. I used a metaphor to describe the situation of Jews in Europe today, as the one, where two trains with ever greater speed are racing towards each other, and we the Jews, are the one man standing on the rails, not knowing which train is going to hit us first. On one hand our synagogues our schools our museums, our elderly and youth are being attacked and killed by radicalized immigrants from the Middle East in many Western European Countries. This is one train.

The other train is the reaction of secular "old Europe" to the onslaught of Muslim radicalism. Instead of fighting the radicals, "old Europe" backlashed with a broadside attack against Islam, forbidding building of minarets, the wearing of traditional covering for women, and trying to outlaw Hallal meat and circumcision. But while Islam might be the primary target of the latest xenophobic European campaigns against circumcision and ritual slaughter, European Jewry is the "collateral damage" in this anti-Muslim offensive. The most glaring example of this when during the French presidential elections, one party endorsed a ban on religious headwear - including

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We would like to thank the Holu See and the Catholic communities of Europe for supporting our quest for religious freedom and our common quest to head off the dangers of Radical Islam, which has become a threat not only for us, but for the world as a whole, as the terrible events in Paris and Copenhagen have shown us. We express our deepest sympathy, prayers and support for the Christians in the Middle East and are proud to note that the Holy Land is an island in that very troubled region, where Christians can continue to enjoy full religious freedoms and their personal safety is protected by the Jewish State.

Coming from Russia with a very important group of our lay leaders it is impossible not to raise the issue of continuous bloodshed and suffering, thousands of victims, hundreds of thousands of refugees, sanctions and counter sanctions, which has led to great economic difficulties for ordinary Russians, Ukrainians and Europeans.

We see the danger of a new mounting wait between East and West, endangering mankind and our world. I started with the mention of the God of Surprises. Who would have thought even twenty five years ago that the East will become the defender of traditional religious values while the West has embraced a secularism, which moves away from its Judeo-Christian heritage. Your Holiness is in a unique position as the leader of Western Christianity, which at one hand embraces traditional religious values and on the other hand is embedded in a modern Western society, which has championed democracy and human rights, to be God's emissary to help build new bridges and bring the East and the West back from the brink of war to a unified and peaceful Europe and the world.

I would like to close with a blessing to Your Holiness and all of us, a blessing of Shalom of peace, for us and the world.

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Date: 2015-04

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Pinchas Goldschmidt is the chief rabbi of Moscow and chairman of the Brussels-based Standing Committee of the Conference of European Rabbis, representing some 800 Jewish religious leaders in over 40 European states.

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Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt

 [Rabbin Goldschmit & pope site.jpg](#)

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[Rabbin Goldschmit & pope site.jpg](#)

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Your Holiness, Your Eminences, dear Colleague Chief Rabbis, dear Members of the Board od Patrons ofthe CER.

Your Holiness in his homilies has spoken of the God of Surprises, a notion of God, which has also been bequeathed to me by my teacher Rabbi Soloveitchik, The God, who unexpectedly carries his will and salvation to humanity through least expected emissaries. The fact that we are meeting today in a historical context is also to celebrate a surprise.

This year 2015 we celebrate fifty years of Nostra Aetate with the declaration that the Church, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved by political reasons, but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone. Nostra Aetate marked a new beginning in the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people.

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We would like to thank the Holu See and the Catholic communities of Europe for supporting our quest for religious freedom and our common quest to head off the dangers of Radical Islam, which has become a threat not only for us, but for the world as a whole, as the terrible events in Paris and Coppenhagen have shown us. We express our deepest sympathy, prayers and support for the Christians in the Middle East and are proud to note that the Holy Land is an island in that very troubled region, where Christians can continue to enjoy full religious freedoms abd their personal safety is protected by the Jewish State.

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I would like to close with a blessing to Your Holiness and all of us, a blessing of Shalom of peace, for us and the world.

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Post

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Your Holiness in his homilies has spoken of the God of Surprises, a notion of God, which has also been requested to me by my teacher Rabbi Soloveitchik, The God, who unexpectedly carries his will and salvation to humanity through least expected emissaries. The fact that we are meeting today in a historical context is also to celebrate a surprise.

This year 2015 we celebrate fifty years of Nostra Aetate with the declaration that the Church, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved by political reasons, but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone. Nostra Aetate marked a new beginning in the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people.

50 years is a full cycle and is described in the Word of God as "leolam" as forever, a word signifying an eternity, which is included in the passing of a Jubilee cycle. And we are today grateful to the honor accorded to us, to celebrate this monumental jubilee in the presence of Your Holiness; and celebrate also all further advances in the relationship between our religions, including the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel.

The world moved beyond Nostra Aetate when Your Holiness stated in 2013 in Evangelium

Gaudium, that "We Christians should embrace with affection and respect Muslim immigrants to our countries" and Your Holiness asked that "Muslim countries grant Christians freedom to worship and to practice their faith, in light of the freedom which followers of Islam enjoy in Western countries"

I would be not overly dramatic if I would describe that many Jews in Europe feel themselves as Christians in the Middle East, even though the governments of Europe have taken steps to protect their Jews. I used a metaphor to describe the situation of Jews in Europe today, as the one, where two trains with ever greater speed are racing towards each other, and we the Jews, are the one man standing on the rails, not knowing which train is going to hit us first. On one hand our synagogues our schools our museums, our elderly and youth are being attacked and killed by radicalized immigrants from the Middle East in many Western European Countries. This is one train.

The other train is the reaction of secular "old Europe" to the onslaught of Muslim radicalism. Instead of fighting the radicals, "old Europe" backlashed with a broadside attack against Islam, forbidding building of minarets, the wearing of traditional covering for women, and trying to outlaw Hallal meat and circumcision. But while Islam might be the primary target of the latest xenophobic European campaigns against circumcision and ritual slaughter, European Jewry is the "collateral damage" in this anti-Muslim offensive. The most glaring example of this when during the French presidential elections, one party endorsed a ban on religious headwear - including kippot in public. This is the other train.

We would like to thank the Holu See and the Catholic communities of Europe for supporting our quest for religious freedom and our common quest to head off the dangers of Radical Islam, which has become a threat not only for us, but for the world as a whole, as the terrible events in Paris and Copenhagen have shown us. We express our deepest sympathy, prayers and support for the Christians in the Middle East and are proud to note that the Holy Land is an island in that very troubled region, where Christians can continue to enjoy full religious freedoms and their personal safety is protected by the Jewish State.

Coming from Russia with a very important group of our lay leaders it is impossible not to raise the issue of continuous bloodshed and suffering, thousands of victims, hundreds of thousands of refugees, sanctions and counter sanctions, which has led to great economic difficulties for ordinary Russians, Ukrainians and Europeans.

We see the danger of a new mounting wait between East and West, endangering mankind and our world. I started with the mention of the God of Surprises. Who would have thought even twenty five years ago that the East will become the defender of traditional religious values while the West will become the defender of traditional religious values while the West has embraced a secularism, which moves away from its Judeo-Christian heritage. Your Holiness is in a unique position as the leader of Western Christianity, which at one hand embraces traditional religious values and on the other hand is embedded in a modern Western society, which has championed democracy and human rights, to be God's emissary to help build new bridges and bring the East and the West back from the brink of war to a unified and peaceful Europe and the world.

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Date: 2015-04

Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt

 [Rabbin Goldschmit & pope site.jpg](#)

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Speech at the Vatican during the meeting with the Pope

Date: 2015-04

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