**UNESCO BOOK PROGRAM PUTS ANTISEMITIC MATERIAL ON DISPLAY**

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The Protocols of the Elders of Zion and Adolf Hitler’s Mein Kampf were among the books featured at a book fair in Sharjah, UAE sponsored by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Simon Wiesenthal Centre exposed the book fair on Thursday and the Centre’s Director for International Relations, Dr. Shimon Samuels, wrote a letter to UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay, condemning the book fair.

“Sadly, the name of UNESCO is abused as appearing to be complicit in validating for young Arab readers, the bigoted stereotypes of Jews - as expounded by Hamas, Hezbollah and Iran. This is particularly damning at a time of reconciliation between Gulf States and Israel, now facing common enemies,” Samuels wrote in a letter to Azoulay.

In the letter, Samuels added, “the organizers are known to carefully vet all titles on display for Islamophobia, but leave Jew-hatred in pride of place!”

Sharjah was declared UNESCO’s 2019 “World Book Capital of the Year,” as part of an initiative that was launched in 1996 “that seeks to encourage and promote publishing activities at the local and global levels by nominating for a one-year period the best city program aimed at promoting books,” according to the Sharjah World Book Capital website.

In July 2019, UNESCO published a blog post entitled “Addressing contemporary antisemitism: A global issue?”, in which the organization acknowledges that “antisemitism did not begin or end with the Holocaust.” It also stated that “antisemitic bigotry” was “no longer restricted to extremist circles,” in the modern world.

“UNESCO promotes education systems that address antisemitism in and through education and build the resilience of young people to extremist ideologies and prejudice,” the blog post concluded.

Samuels noted UNESCO’s efforts against antisemitism and how the book selection at the fair negated the organization’s efforts saying, “Madam Director-General, UNESCO appears in Sharjah to endorse this travesty, thus vitiating your educational booklets campaign on antisemitism and Holocaust denial as meaningless.”