

**JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

מועצת הקהילה היהודית  
בדרום אוסטרליה

jewishcommcouncilsa@gmail.com



Mr Anthony Beasley  
Secretary  
Select Committee on the Prohibition of Neo-Nazi Symbols  
C/- Parliament House  
GPO Box 572, Adelaide 5001  
Via email at: scnazisymbols@parliament.sa.gov.au

13 January 2023

Dear Mr Beasley

The Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc (World Hindu Council of Australia) SA and the Jewish Community Council of South Australia make this joint submission in support of a ban of the production and public display of Neo-Nazi and Nazi symbols, including the Hakenkreuz. We also advocate that any such ban protects the religious freedoms of Hindu, Jain and Buddhist South Australians to peacefully use the swastika symbol, which can be mistaken for the Hakenkreuz.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia SA is the peak body representing Hindu organisations in South Australia. The Jewish Community Council is the equivalent peak body for Jewish organisations. Our organisations coordinate activities across our respective communities in South Australia as well as represent our faith and cultural communities to the broader community.

We have been in dialogue for some time regarding our common goal of increasing cross-cultural understanding and promoting peaceful, multicultural dialogue in South Australia. Both our organisations believe there is no place for hate in modern South Australia.

We are concerned about an increase in far-right extremism which can target both our and other communities, here in South Australia and in other places. We agree legislative frameworks should provide adequate provisions to address actions that propagate hateful ideologies, including production and public display of symbols of Nazi, Neo-Nazi and other contemporary far right ideologies.

Within this context, we request the Committee consider our joint preference that the symbol used by the Nazi regime be referred to as the 'Hakenkreuz,' not the 'swastika.' We ask the Committee consider that:

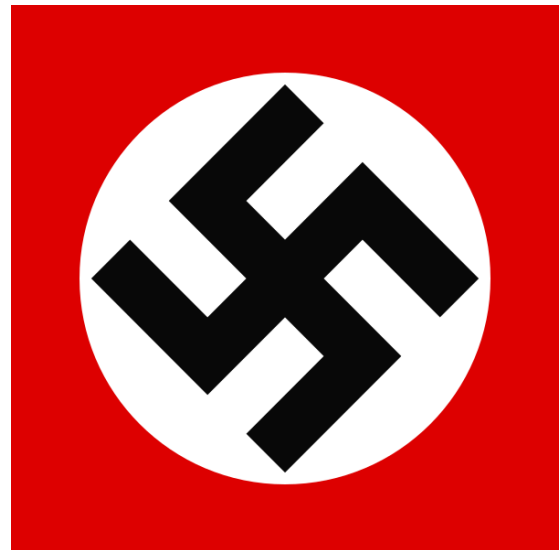
- The word 'swastika' is a Sanskrit word (literally translated as 'let good prevail') describing an ancient symbol used in tradition used by Hindu, Jains and Buddhists to signify the four primordial elements, the four directions, the four Vedas (religious texts) and the universe. See Figure 1 below. The swastika symbol has holy and auspicious connotations within these groups. The swastika symbol was misappropriated as a symbol of hatred.

- Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* used the German word 'Hakenkreuz' ('hooked cross') to describe the symbol that has come to be known as synonymous with Nazi Germany. See Figure 2 below. There is no mention of the word 'swastika' in the writings of Hitler nor in other Nazi literature. The Hakenkreuz was adopted by the Nazi Party as an official symbol and continues to be used as a symbol of neo-Nazi and other far right ideology as a symbol of radicalisation and white supremacy.

Figure 1. Hindu swastika<sup>1</sup>



Figure 2. Hakenkreuz<sup>2</sup>



Nazi and Neo-Nazi symbols are currently permitted to be produced and publicly displayed in South Australia, allowing propagation and normalisation of hate while emboldening those who espouse it.

Our two organisations support a ban of the production and public display of hate symbols, including the Hakenkreuz. Use of the Hakenkreuz outside of education and other limited purposes is culturally abhorrent, harkening back to the Holocaust, simultaneously bringing hurt to Jews as well as desecrating a symbol holy to Hindu, Jain and Buddhist people.

We recognise there is confusion among some in the community about the term 'swastika' and the holy use of the swastika symbol. The implementation of a ban on Nazi symbols should be accompanied by an education program for school-aged students and a general public awareness program to inform the community about the differences between the holy use of the swastika and the use of the Hakenkreuz.

The education and public awareness programs should be informed by both South Australian Jewish and Hindu representation. Both our organisations would welcome the opportunity to support the successful implementation of the prohibition of hate symbols by contributing our knowledge to education and public awareness about the swastika and the Hakenkreuz.

<sup>1</sup> [Wikimedia Commons](#) (2023), accessed 11 November 2023.

<sup>2</sup> [Wikimedia Commons](#) (2023), accessed 11 November 2023.