The Irish rap group “Kneecap” is set to perform in Zurich on Sunday, November 22. Concerts by “Kneecap” have been canceled in various countries due to the group’s glorification of terrorist organizations and anti-Semitic remarks. The Zurich City Council and the Zurich Cantonal Police therefore called on the federal government to impose an entry ban on the group—to no avail. What makes this particularly controversial is that the agency organizing the “Kneecap” concert in Zurich is Jewish-owned.

By Sacha Wigdorovits

“Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people” is a line from the repertoire of the Irish rap trio “Kneecap.” The video also shows one of the three band members wrapping himself in a Hezbollah flag on stage during a concert in London and loudly chanting “Up Hamas, Up Hezbollah” in support of the two Palestinian terrorist organizations.

On the social media platform “X” (formerly “Twitter”), “Kneecap” posted an image showing the Star of David with a swastika in the center. Accompanying the image was the phrase “Israel is a terrorist state – FUCK ISRAEL.”

Anti-Semitic Rap Band Performs in Zurich—Concert Promoter Is Jewish



Chants of “Up Hamas, Up Hezbollah” and a Hezbollah flag draped over his shoulders: “Kneecap” member Mo Chara at a concert in London on November 21, 2024 (Photo: The Times of Israel)


Für dich
Folge ich
Hinzufügen
KNEECAP @KNEECAPC... · 11.12.24
Israel is a terrorist state - FUCK ISRAEL
93
856
8.1K
207K
G... und 92 weitere haben geantwortet

“X” post by Kneecap featuring a Star of David and a swastika

Since the Lebanese terrorist organization Hezbollah and Hamas are banned in the United Kingdom, a criminal complaint was filed against “Kneecap” band member Mo Chara for calling for support for these groups. However, a criminal investigation was denied because the complaint was not filed within the required time frame.

Concerts Canceled in Several Countries—But Not in Switzerland

Other countries did not allow such anti-Jewish and anti-Israel performances by the Irish group to take place in the first place. As a result, “Kneecap” concerts were canceled or banned last year in Germany, the U.S., Canada, and Hungary. In the United Kingdom, too, further performances by the Irish rap band were canceled following the Hezbollah incident in London.

The same thing would have happened in Zurich if the city council and the cantonal police had had their way. “Hamas and Hezbollah espouse a violent, anti-Semitic ideology and have been carrying out acts of terrorism against Jews for decades,” according to a joint statement by the three center-right City Council parties—the FDP, SVP, and Die Mitte.

It continues: “Zurich is home to Switzerland’s largest Jewish community. The knife attack on a Jewish man in March 2024 showed that the threat is real here as well.”

Fedpol rejected a call for an entry ban

For this reason, the three political groups in the city council called for “an investigation by federal authorities to determine whether an entry ban can be imposed on the band.” The Zurich Cantonal Police has submitted such a request to the Federal Office of Police (fedpol).

Although fedpol declined to comment explicitly on the request when asked, it is not difficult to infer from its response that it rejected the request. Given that the agency reports to Federal Councilor Beat Jans, this comes as no surprise. Jans has on several occasions in the past made clear his sympathies for the Palestinians and activists aligned with them. For example, in June 2023, when he was still president of the Basel-Stadt cantonal government, he invited the pro-Palestinian Swedish activist Greta Thunberg—who is known for her anti-Semitic views—to Basel City Hall.

“We do not tolerate anti-Semitism or calls for violence.”

The sold-out “Kneecap” concert will therefore take place on Sunday, November 22, at the X-TRA Haus der Musik in Zurich. This is because Jürg Burkhardt, the managing director of X-TRA, also does not want to prevent the Irish band from performing.

When asked, he replied: “We take these concerns seriously and reject anti-Semitism, discrimination, and calls for violence in any form. Before booking the band, the organizer attended a ‘Kneecap’ concert and did not observe any behavior of this kind. We expect the concert in Zurich to take place in accordance with Swiss law and the regulations of the venue, ‘X-TRA Haus der Musik.’”

Burkhardt leaves open the question of whether he would cancel the “Kneecap” concert should such incidents occur after all.

However, he is also taking a personal risk by doing so. This is because incitement to violence—such as support for terrorist organizations like Hezbollah or Hamas, which is also banned in Switzerland—is a criminal offense.

The same applies to publicly expressed anti-Semitism. This includes chants such as “Up Hamas, Up Hezbollah,” which amounts to support for terrorist organizations that have made the extermination of the Jewish people their mission, depictions of the Star of David alongside the swastika, and the demonization of Israel as a state that commits genocide (an accusation that is factually unfounded).

According to the Swiss Penal Code, not only is the person who makes such a statement guilty, but also those who organized or promoted the event in question.

The concert agency for “Kneecap” is Jewish-owned

In addition to the person in charge of the X-Tra Haus der Musik, where the concert is taking place, this primarily includes the officials at the Zurich-based event agency TAKK ab Entertainment AG, which is organizing the “Kneecap” concert.

What makes this particularly controversial is that TAKK is owned by German entrepreneur Karl-Peter Schulenberg, who is Jewish himself. Schulenberg did not respond to questions from FokusIsrael.ch asking whether he was aware of “Kneecap’s” anti-Semitic views and whether he therefore considered it particularly problematic that his event agency, of all entities, was organizing their concert in

Zurich.

Sacha Wigdorovits is President of the Fokus Israel und Nahost association, which runs the website fokusisrael.ch. He studied history, German and social psychology at the University of Zurich and has worked as a US correspondent for the SonntagsZeitung, was editor-in-chief of BLICK and co-founder of the commuter newspaper 20minuten.