

Concerns Regarding the Use of the Word “Swastika” in Hate References in Bill C-9 – An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Hate Propaganda, Hate Crime, and Access to Religious or Cultural Places)

I, Arunesh Giri, President of the Hindu Canadian Foundation. Today, I stand before you not just as a representative of our organization, but as a voice for truth, dignity, and cultural justice. While expressing my support for Bill C-9 to stand and fight against the rising hate in Canada targeting the Hindu, Jewish, Christian, and other communities, I also raise a critical concern for using word “Swastika” and associating it with word “Nazi” or hate symbol Hakenkreuz.

We support the Government of Canada’s efforts to propose Bill C-9 to address hate crimes, and we stand in solidarity with all Canadian communities facing hate crimes. Hindu Canadians have been severely impacted over the last decade, and especially in recent years, as our Mandir (temples) have become constant targets of hate. More than 30 temples have been attacked in the past three years, and Hindu children and women have been assaulted in broad daylight by CBKE Groups. This bill offers hope to over 1.5 million Hindus and other communities to stand firm against rising hate and protect our basic democratic rights, to live freely, visit our places of worship without fear, and exercise our rights equally.

However, our concern is in the use of the word “Swastika” in hate references in Section 2.2(b) and its association with the Nazi hate symbol. The Swastika is a sacred symbol in Hindu (Sanatan Dharm) civilization, dating back thousands of years, and is widely used and worshipped by over 2 billion Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists worldwide, including over 1.5 million Hindus in Canada. Hindus use the Swastika extensively. It adorns the entrances of our homes as a “welcome” sign and is seen in our Mandirs (temples), both at home and in public.

During festivals such as Deepawali, Navratri, Paryushan, Mahavir Jayanti, Vesak and others, Hindus and other communities draw or use Swastikas in different form e.g. at their doorsteps and create colorful Rangoli patterns containing Swastikas. When purchasing a new car or starting a business, the symbol is prominently displayed in homes and shops. Therefore, using the word “Swastika” in this bill is deeply concerning to millions of Hindu Canadians and other communities and risks inciting hateful behavior toward them. This usage could ignite further hatred against 1.5 million Hindus in Canada, undermining the very purpose of Bill C-9.

Importantly, Swastika is also a place name in Canada. The [town of Swastika](#), Ontario, founded in the early 1900s, was named to reflect prosperity and good fortune. During World

War II, despite pressure to change its name due to its inaccurate association with word “Nazi”, the residents refused, affirming that the name predated Nazi ideology and had no connection to hate. This example underscores the long-standing, peaceful use of the word “Swastika” in Canadian history and highlights the importance of preserving its true meaning.

Furthermore, the word “Swastika” does not originate from Latin or its derivatives (German/Deutsch or other European languages). Hitler and the Nazis never referred to their symbol as “Swastika” or “Nazi Swastika”; they used the term “Hakenkreuz”, “Nazi Hakenkreuz” or “hooked cross,” which is well documented in historical records. Associating the Swastika with Nazi symbols or word “Nazi” or antisemitism spreads misinformation and places the over a 1.5 million Hindu Canadians at greater risk, not only in Canada but globally, while confusing the broader public about the nature of hate symbols.

We urge the committee and chair, Canada being a global leader and a nation that upholds values of inclusion and truth, to remove the word “Swastika” and any reference to it from Bill C-9. This would be a vital first step in amplifying the spirit of the bill and using the correct term for the hate symbol: “Hakenkreuz.”

We understand that Bill C-9 bans the Nazi Hakenkreuz. However, it also uses the phrase “also known as Nazi Swastika,” which is incorrect and unacceptable to Hindu, Jain & Other communities. This concern is shared by nearly all major Jewish organizations, including B’nai Brith Canada, CIJA, ALCCA, and others.

Prominent Jewish organizations such as **Bnai Brith Canada, CIJA, Alliance of Canadians Combating Antisemitism** and others have already corrected this terminology in their campaigns and educational materials. They have removed the word “Swastika” and its association with word “NAZI” and rightly referred to the hate symbol as **Hakenkreuz**. We commend their allyship in rectifying a historical mistake and urge Honorable committee and Parliament to follow suit.

Numerous examples from Canada and abroad support this correction, examples include:

- October 19, 2025 – CIJA calls on the government to protect the use of the word “[Swastika](#).”
- September 19, 2025 – B’nai Brith Canada omits “Swastika” from its release, using “[Hakenkreuz](#)” instead.
- May 2025 – Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe requests removal of “[Swastika](#)” from hate references.
- March 2025 – B’nai Brith Canada revises its campaign after [community](#) outreach.

- March 2025 – Durham Region amends its motion to remove “[Swastika](#)” from hate [context](#).
- [Peel](#) and Montreal Police update hate crime reporting tools to remove “Swastika.”
- Victoria State, Australia bans antisemitic symbols, excluding “[Swastika](#)” from hate references.
- Oregon Department of [Education](#) circulates materials distinguishing Swastika from Hakenkreuz.
- Former MP Chandra Arya speaks in Parliament against misuse of “[Swastika](#).”
- Former MP Peter Julian removed “Swastika” from Bill [C-229](#) after community engagement.
- Toronto Star and other media outlets revise terminology to use “Hakenkreuz” instead of “[Swastika](#).”

We recommend the following amendments to Bill C-9:

1. Remove all references to “Swastika” or it’s association with Word “Nazi” and replace them with the accurate term “Hakenkreuz” or “Nazi Hakenkreuz.”
2. Educate communities, law enforcement, and media on the correct terminology.
3. Strengthen Protections for Sacred Use of the Swastika. We urge the committee to include **clear and explicit exemptions** for the religious and cultural use of the Swastika. The current language in subsection 2.2 of 3.2(a) is too broad to prevent misinterpretation. As seen in **Victoria State, Australia**, specific protections are essential to avoid harmful conflation with Nazi symbols and to uphold Canada’s commitment to religious freedom and cultural dignity.
4. Ensure future committee communications and press releases explicitly mention Hinduphobia, alongside antisemitism, Islamophobia, and homophobia.

Honorable Chair, I want to reiterate, the use of word Swastika in conjunction with Nazi hate work could ignite further hatred against 1.5 million Hindus in Canada, undermining the very purpose of Bill C-9.

Finally, it is important to reflect on the very spirit with which Bill C-9 was introduced to combat “hate propaganda” and protect vulnerable communities.

However, by including the word “Swastika” in conjunction with the term “Nazi,” the bill contradicts its own intent. Instead of countering hate, this mislabeling risks perpetuating misinformation and inadvertently targets communities for whom the Swastika is a sacred and ancient symbol of peace and well-being.

If the reference to “Swastika” is not removed completely, the bill risks losing its moral clarity and undermining its purpose. Let us uphold the true spirit of Bill C-9 by removing the word “Swastika” and replacing it with the historically accurate term “Hakenkreuz.” We urge the

committee to adopt the recommendations of the Hindu Canadian Foundation. Let us ensure that Canada's leadership is reflected in our legislation.

Our testimony is supported by **over 100 organizations across Canada**, including **Hindu, Jain, Jewish, cultural, and social groups**, all united in the call for truth, clarity, and respect

Organizations Endorsing the Hindu Canadian Foundation Submission:

S.No	Organization Names
1	Hindu Canadian Foundation
2	Vishwa Jain Sangathan Canada
3	Canadian Hindus For Harmony
4	Sri Jain Mandir Toronto
5	Canadian Hindu Volunteers
6	Hindu Sikh Unity Forum
7	Brampton Triveni Mandir
8	Panoram India
9	B'nai Brith Canada
10	Bhagwan 1008 Adinatha Swamy Jain Temple Brampton
11	Jain Community Services Canada
12	Shree Arihant Swetamber Murti Pujak Jain Sangh and Cultural Center Brampton
13	Hindu Active Volunteers Association
14	Canadian Hindu Community Welfare
15	Human Awakening Religious Integration One Mankind
16	Hindu Sabha Temple Brampton
17	South Asians in Ontario
18	Hindu Voice Matters
19	Sanatani Bangali Akota
20	United Canadian Sanatani Society
21	Sanatani Community South Shore Montreal
22	Kshatriya Welfare Association Of Canada
23	Hindu Community in Ottawa Foundation
24	South Asian Cultural and Health Association for Youth and Seniors
25	Hindu Association Canada Global
26	Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh Canada
27	Bharat Mata Mandir Brampton
28	Canadian Sanatan Mission
29	Jain International Trade Organization Canada
30	Gujarati Samaj of London Ontario
31	Srishti foundation. London ON
32	Hindu Legacy London ON

33	Divya Foundation Durham
34	Vedic Sevaks Charitable Society
35	North American Hindus Association
36	Shri Gauri Shankar Mandir Religious And Cultural Organization
37	My Indian In Canada Association
38	Hindi Writers Guild Canada
39	Hindu Society of PEI Inc.
40	Nataraj Youth Cultural Organization
41	Shri Radha Madhav Heritage and Cultural Center
42	Hamilton Hindu Samaj Temple
43	Ontario Telugu Foundation
44	Sky Canada World Community Service Centre
45	Sanskar Canada
46	Sanskrit Bharati (Canada
47	Canadian Jain Association of Business & Professionals
48	Santan Mandir Canada
49	Ganesh Utsav - Team YUVA
50	Telgu Friends Club
51	Sri Venkateswara Hindu Heritage and Cultural Center of Hamilton
52	Milton Marathi Group
53	Halton Bihar Association
54	Radio Dhishum
55	Sanskriti Cultural Awareness Society of BC
56	Sheetal Sangeet Canadian Broadcasting
57	Hamilton Teluguvaaru Association (HTA)
58	HALTON CANADIAN PARIVAR
59	Yugal Kunj - Radha Krishna Temple and Community Centre
60	Odias in Canada
61	Global Odia Parivar
62	Bhumihar Samaj of Canada
63	Bhagwat Chintan
64	Bramhin welfare association
65	Canadian Hindu Community Welfare
66	Bihar and Jharkhand Canadian cultural association
67	Halifax Hindu Society
68	Toronto Telugu Community
69	Durham Telugu Club
70	DURHAM TELUGU Association
71	SV TEMPLE OF Durham
72	UPICA (Uttar Pradeshies in Canada)
73	Chinmaya Mission London (Canada
74	Atlantic Alliance of Uttar Bharat

75	Hindu Cultural Centre London
76	Chinmaya Mission Ottawa
77	Tatvamasi Kerala Hindus London Ontario
78	Chinmaya Mission Halton
79	Brantford Brant Telugu Association
80	Gujrati Samaj of London, ON
81	Karnavati London Association
82	Bengali Community of London Ontario
83	Hindi Times
84	Hindu Times Canada
85	International Hindu Foundation
86	Brantford Hindu Temple
87	Brantford Gujarati Group
88	Shirdi Sai Seva Samiti London
89	Halton Telugu Association”, HATA
90	42 Kadva Patidar samaj, canada
91	Umiyadham culture center, Toronto
92	Canada Dhol Tasha, Lazim
93	Himachali Pravasi Global Association (HPGA)
94	Friends of Gujarat (FOG)
95	Gujjus of Hamilton
96	Vishwa umiya foundation
97	Umiya Dham Canada
98	Humans for Harmony
99	Indian Family Association (IFA)
100	Bharatiya Culture Association, Toronto
101	Indian Family Association (IFA)
102	Bharatiya Culture Association, Toronto

Thank you for your time, and for your commitment to justice.

Arunesh Giri

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