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Iranian textbooks "prepare children for Holy War" - Israeli study

By DPA

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Vienna - The Iranian school system systematically prepares children for a global war in the name of Islam, a study by an Israeli NGO said.

Launched in Vienna on Thursday, study authors Arnon Groiss and Nethanel Toobian of the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CIMP) argued that Iranian children were taught to hate the West.

Based on the analysis of 115 textbooks, the authors came to the conclusion that Iran saw itself as 'destined to lead a global struggle against the oppressors in the name of Islam,' the authors said in their study.

The textbooks demonized the West while at the same time glorifying martyrs, CIMP said. Opposition to the West and preparation for Jihad are main themes.

Founded in 1998, CIMP conducted several similar studies about teaching materials in Israel and Arab countries.

The often controversial studies met with criticism from international scholars, especially a study on Palestine textbooks claiming that those were promoting hatred against Jews were criticised as misleading.

The books analyzed were published in 2004 and are used to teach different subjects to different age groups, the authors said.

They stressed that the books were a 'structural part of the regime', and were not introduced in the radicalized political climate introduced by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

'The Iranian school textbooks thus provide an example of a hate curriculum and betray an educational system that prepares school children for war and martyrdom against the West in general, and against the United States and Israel in particular,' the authors concluded.

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