

# Israel rabbinate cuts off ties with Vatican

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Compiled from news dispatches

January 29, 2009

Israel's chief rabbinate severed ties with the Vatican yesterday to protest a papal decision to reinstate a bishop who publicly denied 6 million Jews were killed during the Holocaust. The Jewish state's highest religious authority sent a letter to the Holy See expressing "sorrow and pain" at the papal decision. Chief rabbis of the Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews were parties to the letter. The rabbinate also canceled a meeting with the Vatican set for March. The rabbinate and the state of Israel have separate ties with the Vatican, and yesterday's move does not affect state relations. [Pope Benedict XVI](#), faced with an uproar over the bishop, said yesterday he feels "full and indisputable solidarity" with Jews and warned against any denial of the full horror of the Nazi genocide. With his comments, the pope reached out to Jews angered by his decision to rehabilitate bishop Richard Williamson, who told Swedish TV that evidence "is hugely against 6 million Jews being deliberately gassed." He said 300,000 Jews were killed at most, "but not one of them by gassing in a gas chamber."

<http://www.newsday.com/services/newspaper/printedition/thursday/news/ny-world296015740jan29,0,1479582.story>