



Brussels, 29th of May 2017
Ref. Nr. 1705106

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

We, the undersigned, representing the national organisations of Jewish communities in the European Union, and gathered under the umbrella of the European Jewish Congress, call upon you to support the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism for its implementation by the European Union.

Faced with the increased necessity to combat rising levels of antisemitism in our communities, hate speech in printed and social media and almost daily attacks on Jewish citizens and community institutions in Europe, we believe that government, security agencies and educational institutions require this important tool of definition in order to effectively combat this menace today in Europe.

We note that 24 European Union states are members of the IHRA and therefore signatories to the IHRA definition.

We further note that the six international partners of the IHRA, the United Nations, UNESCO, OSCE/ODIHR, International Tracing Service (ITS), European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Council of Europe asserted that the IHRA was the most qualified organisation to draft such a definition, which came about through wide discussion and exchange of ideas involving leading experts in the field. For further information regarding the content of the definition, please refer to the [official website of the European Commission \(http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=50144\)](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=50144)

We fundamentally believe that the absence of an accepted definition of antisemitism in the legislation of some member states and indeed, the European Union itself, acts as a major obstacle in addressing the real security concerns of our communities and thereby preventing the efficient use of resources by governments in their primary role to protect their citizens.

We strongly reject attempts by some individuals and political organisations to politicise and marginalise the fight against antisemitism within the opposition towards all forms of racism and discrimination by denying the contemporary Jewish experience in Europe and attempting to define the identity of Jews as well as the oppression and discrimination of Jews within pre-ordained political categories.

Those who seek to divide support for effective methods to combat antisemitism in order to further narrow political agendas must be called out for what they are: facilitators of the maintenance of a legislative vacuum that ties the hands of governments and security agencies in fighting antisemitism.

We believe that the affirmation by the European Parliament and the support of all its political groupings of this clear, recognised and effective tool in fighting the scourge of antisemitism will send an important message to those in our communities concerned for their security and their fundamental rights in Europe and be a facilitator for the important measures required both at the legislative and the practical security level for all Member States to tackle antisemitism.

Sincerely,

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President of the European Jewish Congress

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