

Declaration of the First Moscow International Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism (Moscow Declaration)

Moscow, November 2, 2016

We, the participants of the first Moscow International Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism, are politicians, public figures, scholars and educators from Armenia, Belarus, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, and the United States. We are gathered here at the initiative of the Russian Jewish Congress, and with the support of the World Jewish Congress, the Moscow City Government, the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress, the Genesis Foundation, the Simon Wiesenthal Center and other public organizations. We are all committed to achieving a better understanding of anti-Semitic tendencies around the world, and to developing effective strategies to combat racial, ethnic, and religious intolerance.

We condemn anti-Semitism, defined as a biased attitude towards Jews which may manifest itself as hateful rhetoric and acts of violence, including attacks on Jewish property, community institutions and religious facilities.

In support of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) efforts to develop a definition of anti-Semitism, we believe it's important to use their draft definition as the starting point and have it endorsed by the OSCE Ministerial Council on its December 2016 session.

Along with condemning anti-Semitism, we condemn all forms of discrimination based on ethnicity or religion, in compliance with universal human rights instruments, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICRED).

We share the concerns and misgivings of parliamentarians, governments, and educational and public organizations across the world regarding the resurgence of anti-Semitism in politics, international relations, and society.

We note that in recent years anti-Semitism has again gained many followers around the world, and that an increasing number of people demonize Jews and the State of Israel. In Europe, North America, Latin America, and other continents, hundreds of incidents of anti-Semitic violence and vandalism are recorded annually. Anti-Semitic propaganda is also on the rise. To a large extent, the impetus for anti-Semitic violence originates with the proponents of radical Islamism as well as both extreme left- and right-wing movements. Anti-Semitic canards – once thought to be a thing of the past – are resurfacing.

In several countries Holocaust denial and the glorification of World War II Nazi collaborators are on the rise, with the acquiescence or explicit support of local authorities. Anti-Semitic content on the Internet has also become a widespread phenomenon in many different languages.

Amid these trends, Russia has seen a decline in anti-Semitic violence and vandalism, a fact acknowledged by leading international experts. Russia, with its strong stance against incitement of ethnic hatred and xenophobia, has an important role to play in combating modern anti-Semitism.

We appeal to the United Nations and its agencies, such as UNESCO, and to other international organizations to refrain from providing a platform for the demonization of the Jewish people and the State of Israel or the denial of the historical connection of Jews to the Land of Israel.

We support the struggle against anti-Semitism and against all acts of hatred in any context – be it legal, diplomatic, or socio-political – and in every field, from education and workplace relations, to culture and sports, and so forth. As part of this struggle, we appeal to our national governments to enact whatever legislation and regulatory changes are required to combat propagation of hatred; to develop educational programs aimed at vigorously combating the growth of anti-Semitism; to facilitate the commemoration of the Holocaust and counter the glorification of Nazi collaborators, and to encourage the efforts of NGOs to promote tolerance in the media and the Internet; to monitor the data on hate crimes and encourage professional contacts for the exchange of information and expertise on countering anti-semitism.

Emphasizing the role of the Nuremberg Tribunal on its 70th anniversary, we believe it's important to facilitate the commemoration of the Holocaust and combat any form of Holocaust denial or glorification of Nazi collaborators.

Welcoming constructive cooperation between experts from FSU states and international organizations, we propose to discuss the establishment of parliamentary committees on the problem of anti-Semitism and the development of guidelines and performance criteria for overcoming anti-Semitism.

As with any form of nationalism, the roots of anti-Semitism lie in a lack of knowledge concerning the role of a given ethnic group and its contribution to the history of the state and the global civilization. The key to overcoming such attitudes and decreasing the xenophobia level in a society is promoting widespread awareness concerning the

achievements of ethnic groups and common moral values, and facilitating inter-ethnic and inter-religious accord. Educational establishments — schools and universities — must make the struggle against xenophobia and discrimination a priority in their work.

We also propose the establishment of a system of supplementary educational programs on hate crimes for law enforcement officers and court officials, as well as for sports and other organizations, and to support NGOs that already facilitate such programs.

It must be remembered that the struggle against anti-Semitism and, in a broader context, against all acts of xenophobia, depends as much on civic engagement as it does on the efforts of the authorities.

Anti-Semitism is a threat not only to Jews, but to civilization as a whole. Civic society cannot regard any act of ethnic, religious, or racial hatred as “someone else's problem,” or claim that it has no impact on the community. Public organizations must be proactive in voicing their opposition to acts of hatred; they must also foster dialogue on extreme expressions of anti-Semitism, and other racial, religious, and ethnic prejudices, and participate in developing effective ways of maintaining interethnic and interreligious peace and mutual respect.

The battle of ideas remains an important part of the struggle against anti-semitism. We consider it necessary to create a permanent discussion panel in the post-Soviet region, to facilitate the discussion on key issues of countering anti-Semitism and xenophobia in general. This is important for the interaction between the civic society, the scientific community and the authorities, and the international framework of combating anti-Semitism. The holding of the 1st Moscow International “Protecting the Future” Conference on combating anti-Semitism is an important step in that direction.

We appeal to religious leaders of every faith to make every possible effort to counter anti-Semitism and all types of hatred and discrimination.

We appeal to those countries that have imposed limitations on ritual slaughter of animals according to the laws of kashrut (a similar law in 1933 was the harbinger of anti-Semitic policies in Nazi Germany!) and circumcision of children, to repeal these regulations.

It is necessary to establish a research center which will study the current state of anti-Semitism in the post-Soviet region and develop guidelines for countering it. Existing anti-Semitism research centers around the world pay little attention to the state of anti-Semitism in the post-Soviet region.

We appeal for global solidarity – a key prerequisite for the creation of a world without anti-Semitism, intolerance, and ethnic strife.

We call upon government officials, public figures, religious leaders, politicians, scientists, educators, and media professionals around the world to support this Declaration .

Let us protect the future together!