

THE 2010 OTTAWA PROTOCOL ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

On November 9, 2010, Parliamentarians from six continents approved the Ottawa Protocol – a document which represents global cooperation in the fight against antisemitism.

The Ottawa Protocol is a major outcome of the 2010 Conference on Combating Antisemitism, where parliamentarians and experts from over 50 countries gathered in Ottawa from November 7-9, 2010, to take part in it.

The conference, which was hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA) and is the largest of its kind, provided the opportunity for delegates to explore data and exchange best practices to learn about the best ways to combat antisemitism around the world.

Preamble

We, representatives of our respective parliaments from across the world, convening in Ottawa for the second conference and summit of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism, note and reaffirm the London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism as a template document for the fight against antisemitism.

We are concerned that, since the London Conference in February 2009, there continues to be a dramatic increase in recorded antisemitic hate crimes and attacks targeting Jewish persons and property, and Jewish religious, educational and communal institutions.

We remain alarmed by ongoing state-sanctioned genocidal antisemitism and related extremist ideologies. If antisemitism is the most enduring of hatreds, and genocide is the most horrific of crimes, then the convergence of the genocidal intent embodied in antisemitic ideology is the most toxic of combinations.

We are appalled by the resurgence of the classic anti-Jewish libels, including:

- The Blood Libel (that Jews use the blood of children for ritual sacrifice)
- The Jews as “*Poisoners of the Wells*” – responsible for all evils in the world
- The myth of the “*new Protocols of the Elders of Zion*” – the czarist forgery that proclaimed an international Jewish conspiracy bent on world domination – and accuses the Jews of controlling government, the economy, media and public institutions.
- The double entendre of denying the Holocaust – accusing the Jews of fabricating the Holocaust as a hoax – and the Nazification of the Jew and the Jewish people.

We are alarmed by the explosion of antisemitism and hate on the Internet, a medium crucial for the promotion and protection of freedom of expression, freedom of information and the participation of civil society.

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We are concerned over the failure of most OSCE [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe] participating states to fully implement provisions of the 2004 Berlin Declaration, including the commitment to:

“Collect and maintain reliable information and statistics about antisemitic crimes, and other hate crimes, committed within their territory, report such information periodically to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and make this information available to the public.”

We are concerned by the reported incidents of antisemitism on campuses, such as acts of violence, verbal abuse, rank intolerance and assaults on those committed to free inquiry, while undermining fundamental academic values.

We renew our call for national governments, parliaments, international institutions, political and civic leaders, NGOs, and civil society to affirm democratic and human values, build societies based on respect and citizenship and combat any manifestations of antisemitism and all forms of discrimination.

We reaffirm the EUMC – now Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) – working definition of antisemitism, which sets forth that:

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective – such as, especially but not exclusively – the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy, or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

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Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g. claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the State of Israel.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.

Let it be clear: Criticism of Israel is not antisemitic, and saying so is wrong. But singling Israel out for selective condemnation and opprobrium – let alone denying its right to exist or seeking its destruction – is discriminatory and hateful, and not saying so is dishonest.

Members of Parliament meeting in Ottawa commit to:

Calling on our governments to uphold international commitments on combating antisemitism – such as the OSCE Berlin Principles – and to engage with the United Nations for that purpose. In the words of former UN secretary general Kofi Annan, *“It is... rightly said that the United Nations emerged from the ashes of the Holocaust. And a human rights agenda that fails to address antisemitism denies its own history”*;

Calling on parliaments and governments to adopt the EUMC working definition of antisemitism and anchor its enforcement in existing law;

Encouraging countries throughout the world to establish mechanisms for reporting and monitoring on domestic and international antisemitism, along the lines of the *“Combating Antisemitism Act of 2010”* recently introduced in the United States Congress;

Encouraging the leaders of all religious faiths – represented also at this Conference – to use all means possible to combat antisemitism and all forms of hatred and discrimination;

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Calling on the Parliamentary Forum of the Community of Democracies to make the combating of hatred and antisemitism a priority in their work;

Calling on governments and parliamentarians to reaffirm and implement the Genocide Convention, recognizing that where there is incitement to genocide, state parties have an obligation to act;

Working with universities to encourage them to combat antisemitism with the same seriousness with which they confront other forms of hate. Specifically, universities should be invited to define antisemitism clearly, provide specific examples, and enforce conduct codes firmly, while ensuring compliance with freedom of speech and the principle of academic freedom. Universities should use the EUMC working definition of antisemitism as a basis for education, training and orientation. Indeed, there should be zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind against anyone in the university community on the basis of race, gender, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or political position;

We encourage the European Union to promote civic education and open society in its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and to link funding to democratic development and respect for human rights in ENP partner countries;

Establishing an international task force of Internet specialists comprised of parliamentarians and experts to create common indicators to identify and monitor antisemitism and other manifestations of hate online and to develop policy recommendations for governments and international frameworks to address these problems;

Building on the African representation at this conference, to develop increased working relationships with parliamentarians in Africa for the combating of racism and antisemitism; We urge the incoming OSCE chair, Lithuania, to make implementation of these commitments a priority during 2011 and call for the reappointment of the special representatives to assist in this work.

The Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA) brings together some 46 countries and over 250 parliamentarians from around the world to lead the fight against resurgent global antisemitism. Its principal purpose is to share knowledge, experience, best practices and recommendations, encouraging their dissemination in an attempt to deal more effectively with contemporary antisemitism.