

• • • MARCH • 2020 •

• OCTOBER • 2021



EJC | EUROPEAN
JEWISH CONGRESS





European Jewish Congress

Report on Activities

March 2020 - October 2021

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CONTENTS

COVID-19 RELIEF

7

EJC IN ACTION

11

STATEMENTS

53

OP-EDS

114

SOCIAL MEDIA

121

COVID-19 RELIEF EFFORT

From the beginning of the pandemic, the EJC and SACC teams monitored the situation in all the EJC's affiliated communities on a daily basis and tried to respond to their needs as quickly as possible.

Dr Moshe Kantor announced a series of important measures to provide support and assistance to Jewish communities and other people in need to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus crisis. Dr Kantor expressed his full support to everyone affected on behalf of Europe's Jewish communities and emphasised the importance of unity and solidarity in order to overcome the crisis.

SACC by EJC activated crisis-management teams, initiated online conferences with the support of the EJC to share best practices and experiences and managed coordinated action.



Our staff conducted a series of emergency visits and calls to Jewish communities across the continent, to ensure the continuity of Jewish security and Jewish services in spite of the crisis.

In the first quarter of the pandemic, at a time when most countries were facing mask shortages, the EJC supplied over 100,000 masks to Jewish communities across Europe.

Other protective equipment was provided to Jewish communities in order to secure the continuation of Jewish life during the pandemic (e.g. britot milah).



The European Jewish Fund concentrated fully on assisting Jewish communities to overcome health, social and economic effects of the pandemic. Financial support was provided to Jewish communities in distress.

The EJC also conducted a consultation on guidelines for the safe reopening of synagogues and communal buildings.

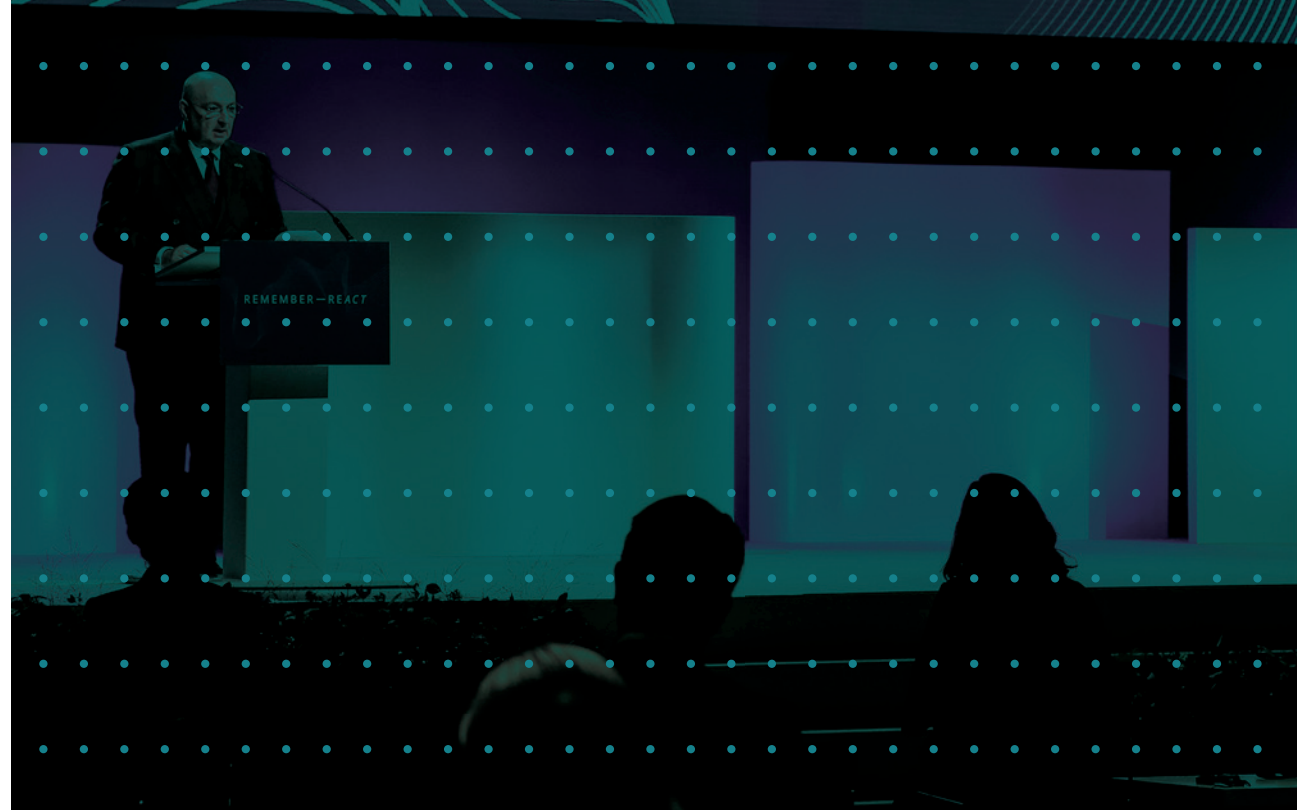
The EJC's efforts have continued throughout the pandemic. Ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2021, the EJC wrote to the health ministers of all 27 EU member states to request that

Holocaust survivors are given vaccines as quickly as possible. This strategy was successful, with several countries confirming that survivors would receive highest priority in their respective national vaccination strategies.



President of European Jewish
Moshe Kantor

EJC
IN
ACTION



MONDAY, 20TH APRIL 2020

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL (ONLINE)

Dr Moshe Kantor delivered an address during a virtual event on the occasion of the release of the Annual Report on Antisemitism Worldwide 2019, by the Kantor Center at Tel Aviv University.

Referring to the statistics compiled by the Kantor Center, Dr Kantor noted that in 2019 there had been a dramatic rise of 18% in antisemitic incidents, whether violent, verbal or visual, continuing the steady rise of antisemitism of the previous few years.

Back then, Moshe Kantor had already warned: **'Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a significant rise in accusations that Jews, as individuals and as a collective, are behind the spread of the virus or are directly profiting from it. The language and imagery used clearly identifies a revival of the medieval 'blood libels' when Jews were accused of spreading disease, poisoning wells or controlling economies.'**

Following the release of the Report, an executive summary was sent to all the Heads of State that attended the Fifth World Holocaust Forum, which took place in January 2020 in Jerusalem.



THURSDAY, 23RD APRIL 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova took part in a European Commission virtual round table with Jewish organisations. The discussion was focused on the impact and repercussions of the Covid-19 crisis on Jewish communities and in particular community life.

WEDNESDAY, 29TH APRIL 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova delivered remarks during a virtual event on the occasion of Yom Ha'atzmaut, 72nd Israel Independence Day, co-organised by BBI, BBE, EJC, WJC, CCOJB, EUJS and ELNET. The event featured HE Ambassador Aharon Leshno-Yaar, Head of the Israeli Mission to the EU and NATO, and a performance by singer Yeriko.



TUESDAY, 19TH MAY 2020

ONLINE



Raya Kalenova took part as a keynote speaker in a virtual public talk via Facebook, organised by the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF). The discussion, hosted by Serge Dahan, treasurer and member of CRIF's Executive Board, focused on the challenges of European Jewish communities after the Covid-19 crisis.

TUESDAY, 26TH MAY 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova took part in the 'Global Round Table – The Day After in Jewish Communities Around the World' forum alongside Isaac Herzog, Chairman of The Jewish Agency for Israel, and Omer Yankelevich, Minister of Diaspora Affairs, to discuss the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on world Jewry.

WEDNESDAY, 27TH MAY 2020

ONLINE

Maria Bagdasarova took part in the WJC Meeting of Community Directors.

WEDNESDAY, 3RD JUNE 2020

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik chaired an EJF Zoom meeting to discuss the needs of Jewish communities in Europe hit by the Covid-19 pandemic in order to coordinate a response.

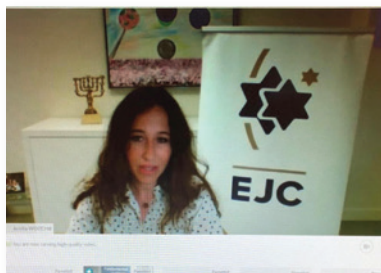
TUESDAY, 16TH JUNE 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova took part in the meeting of the WJC Executive Committee.

WEDNESDAY, 17TH JUNE 2020

ONLINE



Raya Kalenova and Ariella Woitchik took part in the third meeting of the European Commission Working Group on the implementation of the Council Declaration on the fight against antisemitism. This meeting aimed to help member states and Jewish communities to use the IHRA working definition in the process of

collecting data on antisemitic incidents, provide training for law enforcement and judiciary and look into ways to better support victims of antisemitism, in particular in light of the upcoming EU Strategy on victims' rights.

THURSDAY, 18TH JUNE 2020

ONLINE

Maria Bagdasarova took part in the WJC Meeting of Community Directors.

MONDAY, 22TH JUNE 2020

ONLINE



Raya Kalenova addressed a webinar, 'An Accelerated Push to Tackle Antisemitism: The Double German Presidency'. The webinar was organised by the European Jewish Congress in cooperation with B'nai B'rith International and hosted by MEP Nicola Beer, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Chair of the Working Group against Antisemitism (WGAS), and MEP Sergey Lagodinsky, WGAS Vice-Chair.

Ahead of the German presidency of the Council of the EU, and of the IHRA, participants discussed the potential of this double presidency to strengthen initiatives against antisemitism, building on the momentum achieved by the historic Council declaration of 6th December 2018 and adopting best practices from across the EU.

Among other speakers were HE Ambassador Michaela Küchler, Chair of the IHRA, Dr Felix Klein, Commissioner for Jewish Life and the Fight against Antisemitism in Germany, Dr Jurij Aston, Head of Political Affairs at the Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the EU and Benjamin Guttman, EUJS President.

TUESDAY, 23RD JUNE 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova and Ariella Woitchik took part in the Board Meeting of the Claims Conference.

THURSDAY, 23TH JULY 2020

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Ariella Woitchik met with the new Director of the Jewish Museum in Belgium, Barbara Cuglietta.

TUESDAY, 28TH JULY 2020

ONLINE

Dr Moshe Kantor gave opening remarks at the international medical conference 'Covid-19: Sharing the international lessons learned', organised by the UK's Royal Society of Medicine, in partnership with the Kantor Charitable Foundation.

TUESDAY, 15TH SEPTEMBER 2020

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik took part in a virtual Meeting on Education, Resilience, Respect, and Inclusion (MERRI) organised by the Office of International Religious Freedom of the US Department of State.

WEDNESDAY, 16TH SEPTEMBER 2020

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik took part in the round table meeting with major Jewish organisations organised by the office of the European Commission Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life, Katharina von Schnurbein.

WEDNESDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova took part in a combined meeting of the WJRO Council and Executive Committee.

FRIDAY, 9TH OCTOBER 2020

PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY TO THE EUROPEAN UNION, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM



Raya Kalenova spoke at the Halle attack commemoration ceremony hosted by the Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the European Union and organised in partnership with the European Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith International. The event marked the anniversary of the attack by a far-right extremist on the synagogue in Halle, Germany, on Yom Kippur.

HE Martin Kotthaus, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Kingdom of Belgium, reiterated Germany's commitment to preserving Jewish life and fighting antisemitism in all its forms.

The event was also addressed by Alina Bricman, Director of EU Affairs at B'nai B'rith International, and concluded with a minute's silence in honour of the victims of the attack.



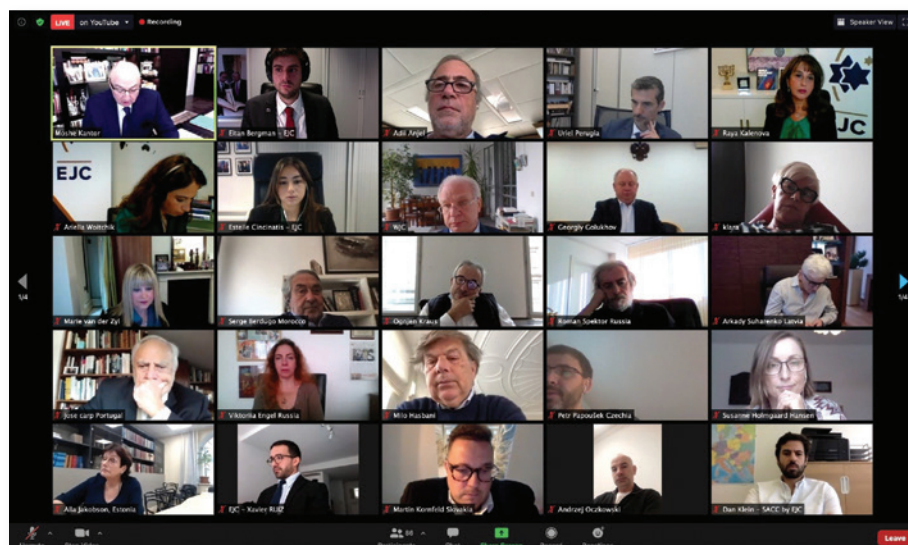
TUESDAY, 20TH OCTOBER 2020

ONLINE

Maria Bagdasarova took part in WJC Meeting of Community Directors.

TUESDAY, 27TH OCTOBER 2020

ONLINE



The EJC held a virtual General Assembly attended by the leaders of 42 affiliated communities.

Dr Moshe Kantor was re-elected as President of the European Jewish Congress. Marie van der Zyl, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, was re-elected as Chair of the Council.

A newly composed Executive Committee was elected by the members of EJC.

During the virtual General Assembly, leaders from 42 European Jewish communities also pledged new action to promote the implementation of the IHRA definition of antisemitism on a national level.

European Jewish leaders were briefed on the recent historic Abraham Accords between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and the United States by HE Emmanuel Nahshon, Ambassador of Israel to Belgium and Luxembourg, and Nancy Khedouri, senior Jewish member of the National Assembly of Bahrain.

THURSDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER 2020

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik met with Lord Mann, the UK Government's Independent Advisor on antisemitism, to discuss joint initiatives.

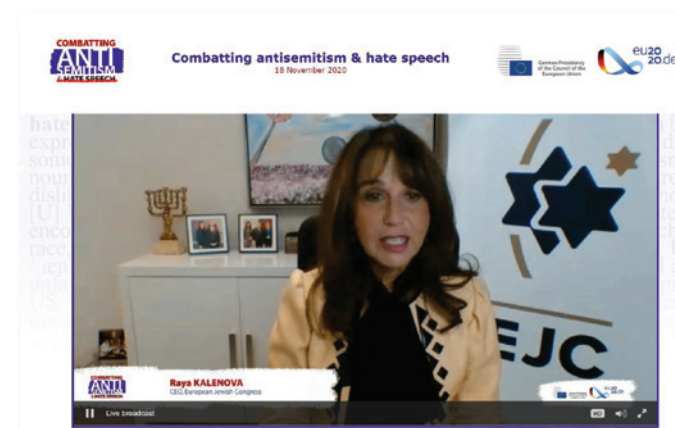
WEDNESDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova addressed the conference 'Antisemitism online – The role of prevention and education in tackling antisemitic hate speech', organised by the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The conference set out to examine the steps taken by governments and digital platforms to guarantee a culture of free and open online debate and to protect victims affected by the proliferation of antisemitic online hate speech.

The panel discussion also included Nicola Beer MEP, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Chair of the EP Working Group Against Antisemitism; Maram Stern, Executive Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress; and Katharina von Schnurbein, European Commission Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life.



THURSDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova addressed the International Meeting of Special Envoys & Coordinators Combating Antisemitism (SECCA) hosted by the World Jewish Congress.

SUNDAY, 22ND NOVEMBER 2020

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova gave opening remarks at the 'First e-Summit of European Jewish leaders' organised by European Council of Jewish Communities (ECJC).

WEDNESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER 2020

ONLINE



Raya Kalenova addressed the webinar 'Online hate speech, conspiracy theories and radicalisation', organised by the European Jewish Congress and hosted by the European Parliament Working Group Against Antisemitism (EP-WGAS).

The online conference brought together policymakers, experts and civil society stakeholders to provide a forum for exploring different perspectives, addressing emerging challenges, identifying best practices and proposing policy recommendations to combat the proliferation of antisemitic conspiracy theories and disinformation.

The discussion featured MEP Nicola Beer, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Chair of WGAS; Dr Ariel Muzicant, EJC Vice-President; Michael O'Flaherty, Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights



(FRA); Krisztina Stump, Head of the Media Convergence and Social Media Unit in Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology of the European Commission; Ahmad Mansour, German-Israeli bestselling author, psychologist and expert on prevention of extremism; and MEP Othmar Karas, Vice-President of the European Parliament and WGAS Vice-Chair.

The discussion was moderated by Maria Bagdasarova and Johanan Seynave.

THURSDAY, 3RD DECEMBER 2020

ONLINE



The Executive Committee of the European Jewish Congress held its first meeting of the new term following the 2020 General Assembly.

TUESDAY, 8TH DECEMBER 2020

ONLINE



Raya Kalenova gave introductory remarks at the fourth meeting of the European Commission Working Group on combating antisemitism, which aimed to support the implementation of the 2018 Council Declaration. The meeting focused on the development of national strategies against antisemitism, the practical use of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)

definition of antisemitism, and fighting against antisemitic prejudices as part of civic orientation measures based on the European Commission Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion.

TUESDAY, 15TH DECEMBER 2020

ONLINE

The European Jewish Congress held its annual meeting of directors of affiliated Jewish communities via Zoom. Over 30 directors, professionals and experts from Jewish communities and organisations throughout Europe joined the online meeting to discuss recent developments, exchange best practices, and discuss opportunities and challenges ahead.

MONDAY, 18TH JANUARY 2021

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova and Johanan Seynave met with Belgian MP Michael Freilich (N-VA) to discuss the issue of religious rights in Belgium.

MONDAY, 18TH JANUARY 2021

ONLINE

The EJC met with representatives of Brussels-based Jewish organisations to discuss joint recommendations for the upcoming EU Digital Services Act.

THURSDAY, 21ST JANUARY 2021

The EJC launched the radio show Europa Judaica on Radio Judaica in Belgium, dedicated to affiliated communities and EJC activities. The show is hosted by Ariella Woitchik and Eitan Bergman and is conducted in French.



MONDAY, 25TH JANUARY 2021

ONLINE



Together with the European Commission, the EJC co-hosted an online event on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas addressed the event and was in conversation with Tomi Reichental, a survivor of Bergen-Belsen, on the lessons of the Holocaust for 21st-century Europe, new forms of remembrance, concepts of atonement and reconciliation, and our common duty to speak up and counter Holocaust denial and distortion. The conversation was moderated by EJC Director of European Affairs Ariella Woitchik.

In his video address, EJC President Dr Moshe Kantor called on the member states of the European Union to ensure that Holocaust survivors have access to a Covid-19 vaccine as soon as possible.

Excerpts from the documentary Close to Evil (2014) were also shown at the event. The film is the compelling story of Reichental's quest to meet one of the SS women who held him captive in Bergen-Belsen.

TUESDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY 2021

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik met with Evan Hochberg, Chief Operating Officer at the World Jewish Restitution Organization and Director of International Special Projects at the Claims Conference, to outline future cooperation.

WEDNESDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY 2021

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik met with Mikolaj Wrzecionkowski, Adviser on Combating Antisemitism at OSCE/ODIHR, to discuss the current needs of Jewish communities across Europe, issues of mutual concern and possibilities for cooperation.

THURSDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY 2021

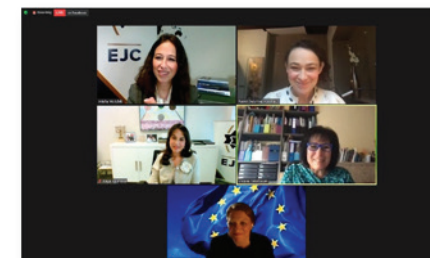
ONLINE

Maria Bagdasarova took part in the round table with major Jewish organisations hosted by the office of the European Commission Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life, Katharina von Schnurbein. EU funding opportunities were discussed, as well the plans regarding the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life.

WEDNESDAY, 3RD MARCH 2021

ONLINE

The EJC participated in the meeting of the Board of the European Parliament Working Group Against Antisemitism, with Nicola Beer MEP presiding. The Board welcomed its newest member Ilana Cicurel MEP (Renew Europe, France). The WGAS plan of action for 2021/2022 was discussed.



MONDAY, 8TH MARCH 2021

ONLINE



On International Women's Day, the EJC organised an online conference entitled 'Antisemitism and sexism: points of intersection'. The webinar explored the intersectionality between the age-old types of discrimination: antisemitism and sexism.

The event, which was held in French with English interpretation, was addressed by MEP Ilana Cicurel (Renew

Europe, France), who is also Founder and President of the citizen collective 'Je m'engage pour l'école'; Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur, author and Editorial Director of the magazine Tenou'a, and Member of the Parliament of the Brussels Capital region; and author, co-founder and president of the Feminist Observatory of Violence against Women, Viviane Teitelbaum. They all shared their experiences of exposure to both types of discrimination and reflected on the connections that exist between them.

Raya Kalenova delivered opening remarks. EJC Director of European Affairs Ariella Woitchik moderated the discussion.

THURSDAY, 11TH MARCH 2021

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova took part in an online public talk with the National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry (NCSEJ).

The event 'One Year Later: The Impact of the Coronavirus on European Jewry' touched upon the most crucial topics affecting European Jewry one year into the global pandemic. Raya Kalenova introduced the work of the EJC, outlined

the EJC's efforts in supporting its affiliated communities throughout the pandemic, and gave details on the progress achieved at policy level in the fight against antisemitism and the fostering of Jewish life in the previous years.

The event was moderated by NCSEJ Vice-Chairman and CEO Mark B. Levin. NCSEJ Chairman Jim Schiller also addressed the event.

WEDNESDAY, 17TH MARCH 2021

ONLINE

The EJC held a special webinar with Dr Emmanuel Navon to discuss Israel's foreign policy challenges and his new book *The Star and the Scepter: A Diplomatic History of Israel* (University of Nebraska Press). The discussion was moderated by Ariella Woitchik and Johanana Seynave.



FRIDAY, 19TH MARCH 2021

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova addressed the 2021 European Anti-Racism Summit co-hosted by the European Commission, the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council and the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup of the European Parliament (ARDI).

The summit was organised for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and addressed the implementation of the European Anti-Racism Action Plan at various levels with the involvement of EU Institutions, member states, civil society, equality bodies and grass-roots organisations.



Raya Kalenova took part in a high-level panel entitled 'The European Anti-Racism Action Plan – From words to action'. During the discussion she stated:

'We as Jews know only too well what institutional and structural racism is. Excluded for centuries from European society, degraded and humiliated with pointed hats and yellow stars, forced to live behind ghetto walls, prevented from exercising most professions, later denied membership of clubs or entrance into universities, and forcibly exiled from almost every European country.

'We know what exclusion is. And we know where it leads. In living memory, half of European Jews were exterminated as the ultimate exclusion.

'Today, antisemitism continues to fester, mutating and finding a home in all ideologies and movements.

'Our experience has taught us that when anyone's rights are in danger, the whole society is in danger. While racism, antisemitism, anti-gypsyism and anti-Muslim hatred exist anywhere, it affects us all.

'And this is one of the reasons why we have to stand together with our brothers and sisters in other minority communities and to offer solidarity and commitment to examining our structures.'

MONDAY, 22ND MARCH 2021

ONLINE

The EJC met with Lord Mann, the UK Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, to discuss the issue of adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism by European football clubs and leagues and other possible cooperation opportunities.

TUESDAY, 23TH MARCH 2021

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova spoke at the 'Bitesize Training Session' for the professional staff of the Board of Deputies of British Jews on the structure and key areas of work of the EJC as well as on the ongoing and upcoming EJC campaigns.

WEDNESDAY, 7TH APRIL 2021

ONLINE



At the release of the Annual Report on Antisemitism Worldwide 2020 by the Kantor Center at Tel Aviv University, Dr Moshe Kantor spoke about the significant rise in extremism and the widespread increase in antisemitic

conspiracy theories over the previous year that could have profound effects on Jewish communities in a post-pandemic world.

THURSDAY, 15TH APRIL 2021

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik and Eitan Bergman met with Alejandro Okret of Moishe House to discuss its ongoing cooperation with the EJC.

THURSDAY, 15TH APRIL 2021

ONLINE

Maria Bagdasarova and Johanan Seynave delivered a presentation and held a Q&A session on the EJC's structure, mission and current campaigns at the meeting of the International Division of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

TUESDAY, 20TH APRIL 2021

ONLINE

Dr Moshe Kantor met with Lord Mann, the UK Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, to discuss possibilities of enhanced cooperation.

WEDNESDAY, 21TH APRIL 2021

ONLINE

The EJC, together with the European Parliament Working Group Against Antisemitism (WGAS), organised a webinar entitled 'Holocaust education and remembrance: keeping up with the digital age'.

The online conference brought together policymakers, civil society stakeholders and experts from leading Holocaust educational projects to provide a forum for sharing best practices and the future vision for Shoah education at a time of a growing generational gap, digitalisation and rising disinformation.



The conference was addressed by:

- **Nicola Beer**, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Chair of WGAS
- **HE Ambassador Christodoulos Lazaris**, Chair of the IHRA
- *MEP and WGAS Vice-Chair* **Sergey Lagodinsky**
- **Maya Kochavi**, Co-Creator and Co-Director of @Eva.Stories
- **Jurmet Huitema-De Waal**, Project Leader Education at the Anne Frank House
- **Hannah Landsmann**, Communications and Education Manager at the Jewish Museum in Vienna
- *MEP and WGAS Board member* **Ilana Cicurel**
- **Iannis Roder**, author and history teacher
- **Georges Mayer**, Founder and President of the Convoi 77 project
- **Colette Avital**, Chair of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel
- *MEP and WGAS Board member* **Brando Benifei**

Ariella Woitchik moderated the event.

THURSDAY, 22ND APRIL 2021

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM



The European Jewish Congress Security and Crisis Centre (SACC by EJC) was awarded a grant of around €3 million by the European Commission to assist in the protection of houses of worship in Europe.

The grant is a result of a partnership with three well-established organisations from the Christian, Muslim and Buddhist communities, the Conference of European Churches, Faith Matters and the European Buddhist Union. The outcome of this partnership is the project 'Safer and Stronger Communities in Europe' (SASCE).

The SASCE project is a multi-layered approach to dramatically increasing security in and around places of worship, as well as within and between Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and Jewish communities. The grant has been awarded by the European Commission's Internal Security Fund – Police (ISFP) mechanism. The SACC by EJC office was assisted by EJC Vice-President Yohan Benizri and EJC Policy Director Johanan Seynave throughout the application process.

For the first time, representatives of the four religious communities will be working together on a common project to enhance security, which will be funded by the European Commission.

As part of this initiative, the four partner organisations will develop tools to strengthen security awareness and crisis management. These tools will be disseminated by a network of ambassadors through trainings and briefings for religious communities, as well as through wider communication campaigns. In addition, as part of a pilot, 1,000 Jewish communal buildings across Europe will be equipped with new technology to increase their protection level.

The project will also strengthen trust and cooperation between civil society and national authorities, facilitating formalised channels of communication between community leadership and public enforcement authorities.

THURSDAY, 22ND APRIL 2021

ONLINE

Johanan Seynave attended a European Commission briefing meeting on funding opportunities related to Holocaust remembrance and education, combating antisemitism and discrimination. The meeting aimed to inform about the European Commission's new calls for proposal and eligibility.

WEDNESDAY, 28TH APRIL 2021

EJC OFFICE, BRUSSELS

Raya Kalenova and the EJC team met with Tanja Fajon MEP, president of the Social Democrats in Slovenia, and her cabinet to discuss the situation regarding restitution in the Republic of Slovenia.

MONDAY, 10TH MAY 2021

MARBELLA, SPAIN

Raya Kalenova met with Isaac Benzaquen Pinto, President of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Spain, and Raphael Cohen, President of the Jewish Community of Marbella, to discuss the issues faced by the Spanish Jewish community and to plan joint initiatives.



MONDAY, 10TH MAY 2021

ONLINE

The EJC hosted a briefing for the affiliated communities on funding opportunities available under the European Commission's new Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV) for 2021–27. The briefing was conducted by Johannes Boermann, Policy Officer at the European Commission.

TUESDAY, 26TH MAY 2021

ONLINE

Dr Moshe Kantor addressed the 16th Plenary Assembly of the World Jewish Congress.

Dr Moshe Kantor was re-elected as Chair of the Policy Council of the World Jewish Congress (WJC). Dr Kantor ran uncontested at the 16th Plenary Assembly of the WJC and will Chair the Policy Council for a third consecutive term.

TUESDAY, 1ST JUNE 2021

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Raya Kalenova met with HE Ambassador Urs Bucher, Head of the Mission of Switzerland to the EU, and incoming Ambassador of Switzerland to Israel.

WEDNESDAY, 2ND JUNE 2021

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova participated in a digital meeting regarding the planning of the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism. The meeting was hosted by Anna Ekström, Swedish Minister for Education.

WEDNESDAY, 2ND JUNE 2021

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

The EJC coordinated an initiative with all major international Jewish organisations to present joint recommendations to the European Commission to combat antisemitism and to foster Jewish life in Europe, ahead of the publication of the European Union's first-ever strategy to combat Jew-hatred.

These efforts resulted in a document including 76 recommendations across 12 thematic areas, endorsed by the EJC, the World Jewish Congress (WJC), B'nai

B'rith International (BBI), the American Jewish Committee Transatlantic Institute (AJC-TAI), The European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ), the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ), B'nai B'rith Europe (BBE), and CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe.

All the groups recognised and applauded the sustained efforts in recent years to curb this age-old scourge and expect the European Commission to widen and deepen its work in the upcoming EU strategy, which was announced by European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas earlier in 2021.

The recommendations build on the Council Declaration on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across policy areas, adopted unanimously by all EU member states in December 2020, and made concrete proposals for a wide spectrum of EU policy portfolios.

THURSDAY, 3RD JUNE 2021

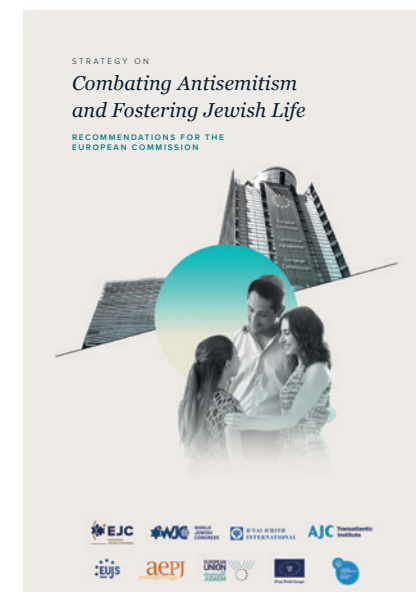
MISSION OF ISRAEL TO THE EU AND NATO, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Raya Kalenova attended a briefing by HE Ambassador Aharon Leshno-Yaar, Head of the Israeli Mission to the EU and NATO.

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, 3RD AND 4TH JUNE 2021

ONLINE

Ariella Woitchik addressed the fifth meeting of the European Commission's Working Group on the implementation of the Council Declaration on the fight against antisemitism. This Working Group meeting was the main event for consulting member states and Jewish communities on the development of the forthcoming EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life that the European Commission will adopt by the end of 2021. The objective of the meeting was to gain input on the issues that the strategy should address and what concrete actions the Commission can take to tackle them.



MONDAY, 7TH JUNE 2021

ONLINE

The EJC held the meeting of the Task Force on Religious Rights to discuss relevant updates from communities and outline a strategy to address outstanding issues.

TUESDAY, 8TH JUNE 2021

ONLINE

The EJC met with the incoming Vice-President of Board of Deputies of British Jews David Mendoza-Wolfson.

WEDNESDAY, 16TH JUNE 2021

ONLINE

Dr Moshe Kantor addressed an event held by Tel Aviv University commemorating the fifth anniversary of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

Dr Kantor pointed out that the recent rise in antisemitism during the conflict between Israel and Hamas demonstrates why the definition and its examples are so vital.

The event held by the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry was titled 'Who Is an Antisemite? The Polemic and Its Significance', and brought together leading academics, experts and activists in the arena of antisemitism for a symposium to talk about the significance and necessity of the definition.

THURSDAY, 24TH JUNE 2021

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova attended the meeting of the WJC Executive Committee.

MONDAY, 5TH JULY 2021

ONLINE

Raya Kalenova hosted a dinner in honour of the outgoing Head of the Israeli Mission to the EU and NATO, HE Ambassador Aharon Leshno-Yaar. The dinner was attended by the following dignitaries:

- **Francesco Talò**, *Permanent Representative of Italy to NATO*
- **Spiros Lambridis**, *Permanent Representative of Greece to Nato*
- **Dimitar Tzantchev**, *Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the EU and incoming Head of EU Delegation to Israel*
- **Georges Friden**, *Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the EU*
- **Emmanuel Nahshon**, *Ambassador of Israel to Belgium and Luxembourg*
- *European Commissions Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life* **Katharina von Schnurbein**
- **Sergey Lagodinsky** *MEP*
- **José Ramón Bauzá Díaz** *MEP*
- **Daniel Braun**, *Deputy Head of Cabinet of EU Commissioner for Values and Transparency Věra Jourová*
- **Prince Michel de Ligne**

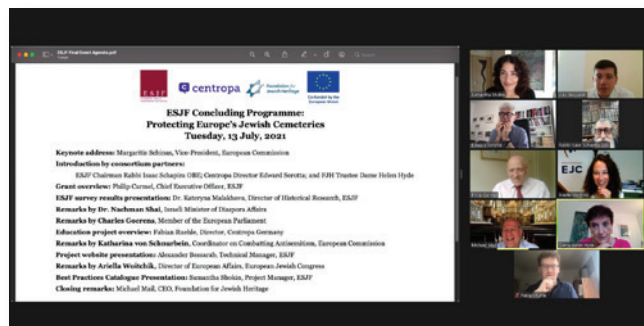
TUESDAY, 6TH JULY 2021

ONLINE

The EJC participated in the meeting of the Board of the European Parliament Working Group Against Antisemitism (EP-WGAS), with Nicola Beer MEP presiding. Topics discussed included the upcoming meeting with European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas on the Roadmap and the upcoming Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in the EU, as well as the calendar of the upcoming activities of WGAS.

TUESDAY, 13TH JULY 2021

ONLINE



Ariella Woitchik addressed an online conference on the protection of Jewish cemeteries in Europe organised by the European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative (ESJF), in cooperation with Centropa and the Foundation for Jewish Heritage.

The conference presented findings of the pilot project 'Protecting the Jewish cemeteries of Europe', funded by the European Commission.

In her remarks, Ms Woitchik congratulated this initiative, emphasising its importance, not only for Jewish communities, but for European society.

Alongside Ms Woitchik, the conference was addressed by European Commission Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life Margaritis Schinas, Israeli Minister of Diaspora Affairs Dr Nachman Shai, MEP Charles Goerens, European Commission Coordinator on Combating Antisemitism Katharina von Schnurbein, and ESJF CEO Philip Carmel, among others.

TUESDAY, 13TH JULY 2021

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, BRUSSELS (ONLINE)

The EJC participated in the meeting between the Board of the European Parliament Working Group Against Antisemitism (EP-WGAS) and European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas, where the upcoming Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in the EU was discussed.

WEDNESDAY, 14TH JULY 2021

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

Raya Kalenova addressed the 7th Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism (GFCA), held in Jerusalem.

Ms Kalenova took part in a panel discussion entitled, 'A Vaccine against Antisemitism: Education and Historical Research'. The main objective of the session was to emphasise the central importance of education as a long-term strategy against antisemitism and to ascertain the fundamental knowledge that every individual in society needs to hold regarding Holocaust history and its lessons.



The panel also included President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews Marie van der Zyl; Kishan Manocha, Head of the Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR); Eyal Kaminka, Director of the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem; and Anna Bokshitskaya, Executive Director of the Charitable Foundation Russian Jewish Congress.

The panel was moderated by Yossi Gevir, Director of External and Governmental Affairs at Yad Vashem.

WEDNESDAY, 14TH JULY 2021

EJC OFFICE, BRUSSELS

The EJC team met with Sonja Viličić, Executive Director at Haver Serbia, to discuss ongoing collaboration and possible joint initiatives.

TUESDAY, 20TH JULY 2021

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Raya Kalenova met with HE Annika Hahn-Englund, Ambassador of Sweden to Belgium and Luxembourg, to discuss the upcoming Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism.

WEDNESDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER 2021

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Raya Kalenova and Ariella Woitchik met with incoming Ambassador of Israel to the EU and NATO, HE Haim Regev, and Head of the European Parliament Department at Israel's delegation to the EU Michal Philosoph.

THURSDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER 2021

EJC OFFICE, BRUSSELS

The EJC office met with HE Annika Molin Hellgren, Sweden's Ambassador to Belgium, to discuss the upcoming Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism.

FRIDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER 2021

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM



Ariella Woitchik addressed a round table organised by HIAS Europe on the importance of humanitarian action for a European Jewish agenda.

The meeting brought together representatives of European and local Jewish community organisations to discuss current issues of humanitarian concern and opportunities to partner

with HIAS, within the context of its emergency response strategy.

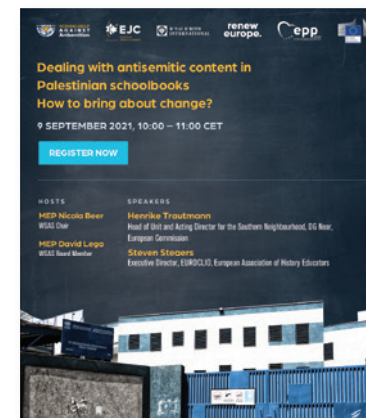
THURSDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER 2021

ONLINE

The European Parliament Working Group Against Antisemitism (WGAS) held a meeting with Henrike Trautmann, Head of Unit and Acting Director for the Southern Neighbourhood at the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), on dealing with antisemitic content in Palestinian textbooks.

The meeting brought together experts to discuss the findings of a report on Palestinian textbooks requested in 2019 by High Representative Vice-President Federica Mogherini and published in June 2021 by the Georg Eckert Institute for International textbook research.

In the spirit of inter-institutional relations, the meeting sought to lay the groundwork for a long-term partnership among all stakeholders, with the aim of finding new ways to put an end to harmful educational concepts and establishing educational curricula free from prejudice, hatred and incitement.



The event was hosted by WGAS Chair and European Parliament Vice-President Nicola Beer MEP and WGAS Board Member David Lega MEP. They were joined by WGAS Board Members Ilana Cicurel MEP and Dragoș Tudorache MEP; Professor Dr Eckhardt Fuchs, Director of the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI); Professor Dr Riem Spielhaus, Head of Department, Knowledge in Transition, Georg Eckert Institute (GEI); Steven Stegers, Executive Director, European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO); Johanan Seynave, Policy Director, European Jewish Congress; and Alina Bricman, Director of EU Affairs, B'nai B'rith International.

MONDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER 2021

ONLINE

The EJC met with Lord Mann, the UK Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, to discuss updates on joint initiatives.

EU STRATEGY ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE



On 5th October 2021 the European Commission adopted the first ever EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life for the period 2021–30.

The Strategy is the outcome of six years of successful advocacy that started with the call by the EJC in 2015 to appoint a Coordinator on combatting antisemitism, and included one European Parliament Resolution and two European Council Declarations.

Ahead of the publication of the Strategy, the EJC coordinated a coalition of nine Jewish organisations to publish a policy paper with 76 recommendations. Of these, almost three quarters (56) were taken into account for the final Strategy document, including the most important demands.

The Strategy comprises three pillars: preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism; protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU; and education, research and Holocaust remembrance. It seeks to place the EU firmly in the lead of the global fight against antisemitism.

The European Commission has called on EU institutions, member states, international organisations and all civil society actors and citizens to commit to a future free from antisemitism in the EU and beyond.

Key elements of the strategy:

- More funding and operational support for security projects for synagogues and communal buildings (EUR 24 million in 2022)
- More funding for projects to record antisemitic hate speech and hate crime
- More support to train judges, police and prosecutors to respond to antisemitic hate crime
- An annual civil society forum on combating antisemitism
- No EU funding for projects promoting hatred and violence against the Jewish people
- An EU-wide network of trusted flaggers to remove illegal content online
- New binding standards on antisemitism for national equality bodies
- Best practices to inform migrants about EU values, including in regard to antisemitism
- Promoting the fight against antisemitism in political dialogues in third countries
- Creation of a European research hub on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life
- Funding for digitalising archives and testimonies of Holocaust survivors
- Safeguarding and rehabilitation of Jewish heritage sites within and outside the EU
- Cooperation with online companies to stop the illegal sale of Nazi memorabilia and literature
- Encouragement of all 27 member states to ensure that Jews can live their lives in accordance with their religious and cultural traditions
- Encouragement of all nine EU member states that have not yet adopted the IHRA definition to do so
- EU-wide survey of antisemitic prejudices

The strategy will be implemented over the next ten years. Comprehensive reports will be published in 2024 and 2029 based on progress by the Commission and the 27 Member States.

SUNDAY, 3RD OCTOBER 2021

DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

Raya Kalenova met with Nina Ofner Bokan, President of the Jewish Community of Montenegro, to discuss the situation of the community and EJC's participation at the upcoming Mahar conference.



MONDAY-TUESDAY, 4-5TH OCTOBER 2021

ZAGREB, CROATIA

Raya Kalenova visited the Jewish Community of Zagreb and met with its leadership. Meetings were held with Ognjen Kraus, President of the Coordinating Committee of Jewish Communities in Croatia, and Saša Cvetković, Vice-President of the Jewish Community of Zagreb and Head of Security, to discuss the challenges faced by the community in the country following the pandemic and earthquake.

TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY, 12TH-13TH OCTOBER 2021

MALMÖ, SWEDEN



Dr Moshe Kantor addressed the plenary of the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism (Remember – ReAct) on behalf of Europe's Jewish communities, and called on world leaders to focus their efforts on fighting extremism and conspiracy theories among the youth. 'Over the past year and a half, young people have been locked down and exposed 24/7 to online disinformation, extremism and antisemitism. Never

in history was a young generation so intensively brainwashed with conspiracy theories and lies, and at the same time so unfamiliar with the tragedy of the Holocaust,' Dr Kantor said. 'Therefore, preventing young people from falling into extremism is one of the fundamental challenges of our time. But so far the majority of our strategies has failed.'

Dr Kantor stressed the importance of a multi-faceted approach to the problem of extremism by providing solid economic foundations and channeling the force of social influence for good: 'We must invest more in young people; we need a new social contract between generations. We must adapt to the digital age, find the most relevant influencers online and build social platforms that will attract our younger generations and open their souls and minds.'

'We cannot win the fight against antisemitism without winning the fight against extremism in general. We can turn social media from a potential mental health catastrophe into the most effective way of combating extremism,' he added.

Dr Kantor spoke in front of heads of state and government, researchers, experts and civil society representatives from around 50 countries. This was Dr Kantor's first in-person international public appearance since the Fifth World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem. The Malmö International Forum was to take place in October 2020, 75 years after the end of the Second World War and the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, but was delayed.

The Forum was hosted by Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and addressed virtually or in-person by many national leaders, including Israel's President Isaac Herzog, Finland's President Sauli Niinistö, Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, Ireland's Taoiseach Micheál Martin, Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, President of Latvia Egils Levits, UN Secretary General António Guterres, European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.



On the sidelines of the Forum Dr Moshe Kantor and EJC delegation had meetings with President of the European Council Charles Michel, European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas, Austrian Federal Minister for the EU and Constitution Karoline Edtstadler and Israel's Minister of Diaspora Affairs Nachman Shai.

HM King Carl XVI Gustaf and HM Queen Silvia of Sweden were also in attendance. Leaders of hi-tech and social media companies such as Google, Facebook and Tik Tok also participated.

TUESDAY, 19TH OCTOBER 2021

MOSCOW, RUSSIA



Raya Kalenova delivered remarks and presented the award on behalf of Dr Moshe Kantor.

'You have devoted your life to preserving Jewish traditions in post-Soviet Russia and supporting communities across this vast country. Having implemented hundreds of programmes bolstering Jewish culture and identity, you have played an invaluable role in revitalising Jewish life,' Dr Kantor said in his message read by Ms Kalenova.

The EJC bestowed upon Vladimir Shternfeld, President of the Federal Jewish National Cultural Autonomy (FENKA), the Navigator to Jerusalem award in a ceremony in Moscow recognising his life-long commitment to fostering Jewish life in Russia and his continued service for the benefit of the Jewish community in the country.



'You have also made a significant contribution to the development of intercultural dialogue, to the strengthening of solidarity and understanding between the communities and peoples of multinational Russia.'

The ceremony was also addressed by Georgy Golukhov, FENKA Vice-President in charge of International Affairs and EJC Vice-President, and Igor Dabakarov, FENKA Director General.



HE Ambassador of Israel to Russia Alexander Ben Zvi, Tatiana Vagina, Head of the Ethnic Policy Unit at the Department of Home Affairs at the Russian President's Executive Office, and Chief Rabbi of Russia (CJROAR) Adolph Shaevich took the stage to congratulate the awardee.

The event was attended by representatives of Russian Jewish and public organisations and authorities.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, 21ST-24TH OCTOBER 2021

BUDVA, MONTENEGRO

An EJC delegation took part in the 8th Mahar Conference organised by the Jewish community of Montenegro in Budva on 21-24 October.

Representing the EJC were Policy Director Johanan Seynave, Public Affairs Officer Eitan Bergman and SACC by EJC Head of Crisis Management Dany Choueka.

Mr. Seynave delivered remarks during the opening ceremony alongside Prime Minister of Montenegro Zdravko Krivokapić, Ambassador of the State of Israel to Serbia and Montenegro, H.E. Amb. Yahel Vilan, President of the Jewish community of Montenegro Nina Ofner Bokan, World Jewish Congress Executive Director of Operations Ernest





Herzog, and Chief Rabbi of Croatia and Montenegro Luciano Moše Prelević.

In his remarks, Mr. Seynave welcomed the Jewish community of Montenegro into the EJC family once more one year into its admission as its newest affiliated national Jewish community.

“We are delighted to see a strong, confident and united community in Montenegro today, the EJC is proud to be a partner of this important conference”,

he added, praising the leadership of President Nina Ofner Bokan, Community Manager Ljiljana Vuković and Chief Rabbi Moše Prelević.

“I want to assure you that you can count on the support of the EJC in all your initiatives and we look forward to many years of fruitful cooperation.”

Mr. Seynave also welcomed the strong cooperation between the Jewish community and the government of Montenegro under the prime ministership of Mr. Krivokapić, and especially the government’s strong commitment to promoting Jewish life in the country.

At the ceremony, the EJC was presented by President Ofner Bokan with a commemorative medal on the 30th anniversary of the successful conclusion of efforts by the State of Israel to bring Ethiopian Jews to safety under “Operation Brothers.”

In addition, Mr. Seynave, Mr. Bergman and Mr. Choueka delivered a lecture entitled: “A strong Jewish voice for Europe”, presenting the activities of the EJC and focusing on recent achievements in the fight against antisemitism at the national and European level.

The conference also included sessions on the tangible and intangible Jewish heritage of the Bay of Kotor, diplomatic ties between the State of Israel and the Western Balkans, Far-right extremism, the synagogues of the Vojvodina region and Comparing the Israeli and Montenegrin experiences of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The conference concluded with a bilateral meeting between the EJC delegation and Montenegrin Minister of Defence Dr. Olivera Injac, which focused on civil society’s role in promoting best practices regarding Crisis Management.

TUESDAY, 26TH OCTOBER 2021

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

The EJC held an event honouring the Portuguese Righteous Among the Nations Aristides De Sousa Mendes together with the Portuguese Socialist Party Delegation to the European Parliament at Cinema Galleries in Brussels.

The event entitled “Tribute to Aristides de Sousa Mendes. L’Heritage d’Aristides” followed a decision by the Portuguese Parliament to grant Aristides de Sousa Mendes National Pantheon honours on June 9 2020, and a ceremony in Lisbon as his tomb was placed alongside other celebrated figures from Portuguese history on October 19 2021.



EJC Executive Vice President and CEO Raya Kalenova delivered remarks at the event on behalf of the EJC. She was joined by the President of the Portuguese Socialist Delegation in the European Parliament MEP Carlos Zorrinho, the President of the Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament MEP Iratxe García-Perez, MEP Isabel Santos, MEP Manuel Pizarro and Hilda de Vleeschauwer, a survivor saved by the actions of Mr. De Sousa Mendes.

During her remarks, Ms Kalenova stressed the importance of the Righteous Among the Nations to the Jewish people and the value of learning from their stories.

“For the members of our Jewish communities, many of whom are survivors and descendants of survivors of the Holocaust, the greatest tragedy in our European history, the Righteous Among the Nations and their deeds are very close to our hearts. Even more so, it is through their courage and heroism that

many of us are in this world. And the most courageous thing about their stories is to do the right thing regardless of personal cost.”

“Aristides de Sousa Mendes acted in a climate of fear, indifference, denunciation & collaboration with Nazism, at a time when the Nazi victory seemed unstoppable. Most of the Jews who in 1940 managed to cross the Pyrenees to the border with Portugal did so thanks to Sousa Mendes”

“The legacy of Aristides de Sousa Mendes is that courage and respect for the sanctity of human life must prevail in the face of adversity. It is up to all of us to follow our conscience and stand up against injustice, against antisemitism, racism and all forms of hatred.”

The event concluded with a screening of the documentary “The Legacy of Aristides” (2020) by Patrick Séraudie, which explores the acts of resistance and the subsequent retribution exacted upon Sousa Mendes by the Portuguese government for his heroic acts.

As the Portuguese consul in Bordeaux in 1940, Sousa Mendes found himself continually more restricted by the policies of Portugal’s dictator Salazar. When the Portuguese government denied visas to the swelling number of refugees entering Portugal because of their religion and perceived race, Sousa Mendes began his first acts of disobedience.

Over a period of six months, and following his own conscience, Sousa Mendes signed thousands of visas that spared the lives of an estimated 30.000 people, including 10.000 ten thousand Jews.

The event was honoured by the presence of H.E. Amb. Emmanuel Nahshon, Ambassador of the State of Israel to the Kingdom of Belgium.

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STATEMENTS & OP-EDS



EJC WELCOMES THE FIRST EVER EU STRATEGY ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND STANDS READY TO ASSIST IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION

OCTOBER 5, 2021

The European Jewish Congress welcomes the release of the ground-breaking document, European Union Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life, and looks forward to working with relevant leaders and officials to ensure its implementation.

The Strategy comprises three pillars; preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism, protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU, and education, research and Holocaust remembrance. It seeks to place the EU firmly in the lead of the global fight against antisemitism.

The European Commission has called on EU institutions, Member States, international organisations and all civil society actors and citizens to commit to a future free from antisemitism in the EU and beyond.

"This is an unprecedented and vital document that will act as a roadmap to significantly reduce antisemitism in Europe and beyond," said Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress.

"It is a commitment to the Jews of Europe that we belong and are a vital part of the European future, and the continent's decision-makers will be making a supreme effort to ensure Jewish life flourishes."

"As the head of the political representation of all Europe's Jewish communities, I am pleased that the EU addressed our concerns and recommendations in this initiative and we stand ready to assist in any way towards the implementation of this important strategy."

The strategy will be implemented over the period 2021-2030. Key elements of the strategy include increased funding and operational support for the protection of synagogues and Jewish communal buildings, enhanced training for justice and law enforcement, ensuring that EU funding does not fund hatred or violence in third countries, a new European research hub on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life and culture, and encouraging all EU member states that have not yet adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism to do so.

"Combating antisemitism is the cornerstone for maintaining vibrant and contributing Jewish life in Europe," Dr Kantor said. "This document and the

involvement of the most senior actors working in this field, notably European Commission President von der Leyen, Vice President Schinas, and Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life Katharina von Schnurbein, demonstrates clearly that words are being turned into positive actions."

EJC STRONGLY REGRETS DECISION OF BELGIAN CONSTITUTIONAL COURT TO UPHOLD SHECHITA BAN

OCTOBER 1, 2021

The European Jewish Congress expresses its profound regret at the decision of Belgium's Constitutional Court to uphold a ban on the Jewish method of slaughter of animals for meat, known as Shechita.

The Court upheld two decrees adopted in 2017 which banned Shechita in the Flemish and Walloon regions of Belgium in 2017, ruling that these did not violate religious freedoms according to the Belgian constitution.

This follows a 2020 decision by the European Court of Justice that ruled that Belgium was allowed to impose stricter rules on the slaughter of animals than those prescribed by the EU.

"The decision of the Constitutional Court sends a very clear message to Belgium's Jews. We reject your religious practices, your rights are secondary to those in the Belgian society, who are less interested in a holistic approach to real animal welfare, your centuries-old presence in this country is taken for granted," EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor said.

"Belgium now has legislation outlawing Shechita which mirrors laws passed in other European countries at two dark periods in European history. Firstly, to directly prevent the entry of Jews in the 19th century and secondly by the Nazis as the first step in destroying Jewish life in Germany in the immediate pre-war period," Kantor added.

"In a country which allows hunting for sport and many other practices which show no care whatsoever for animal welfare, there is little doubt that the motivation for this legislation is to target minority communities, not to protect animals. It is discriminatory against Jews."

Dr. Kantor said that the message of the Court is one not only for Belgian Jews but for all European Jews.

"This started with Belgian politicians but gained legitimacy from two rulings that failed to protect our fundamental rights. Europe as a whole needs to make it clear to Jewish communities that they are welcome as free and complete citizens and where they can practice their Jewish faith unhindered. Coming in a context of widespread antisemitism, Europe's Jews are once again asking today whether Europe can still be a home for their children."

The European Jewish Congress expresses its solidarity with its Belgian affiliate, the Coordinating Committee of Belgian Jewish Organisations (CCOJB) and with the whole Belgian Jewish community.

We call upon the political echelon in Belgium to immediately engage in dialogue with the Jewish community and to overturn this discriminatory legislation and to show confidence and support for the maintenance of Jewish life in Belgium.

EJC MOURNS THE LOSS OF AFGHANS AND AMERICANS AFTER KABUL AIRPORT TERROR ATTACK

AUGUST 27, 2021

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) has expressed its deepest condolences after some 90 Afghan civilians, including women and children, and 13 American soldiers were killed in a terrorist attack outside the gates of Kabul airport yesterday.

"This was a cowardly attack on Afghans fleeing for their lives, and on American servicemen who were involved in a humanitarian act of trying to help Afghan civilians who worked with the allied forces for a better Afghanistan, escape the country." Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, said. "We mourn the loss of all of these lives and pray that there will be no more lives lost in this terrible and tragic situation."

DR. MOSHE KANTOR CONGRATULATES DANI DAYAN ON HIS APPOINTMENT AS CHAIRMAN OF YAD VASHEM

AUGUST 24, 2021

EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor congratulated Dani Dayan on his appointment as Chairman of Yad Vashem.

"On behalf of the European Jewish Congress, the representative organization of European Jewish communities, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on your appointment as Chairman of Yad Vashem." Dr. Kantor said.

"Holocaust memory, education and commemoration continue to be essential, now more than ever especially as the last survivors and physical witnesses of the Shoah begin to dwindle."

"With growing antisemitism and increasing Holocaust denial it is vital that we lead efforts to educate and inform and ensure that the memory of the Holocaust is maintained," he added.

"As such, we cherish our close cooperation with Yad Vashem, which culminated in the Fifth World Holocaust Forum, on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest diplomatic event in the history of the State of Israel."

"We look forward to collaborating with Yad Vashem under your chairmanship on future initiatives."

EJC SLAMS POLISH PRESIDENT FOR RATIFYING ANTI-RESTITUTION BILL CALLING IT UNDEMOCRATIC, UNJUST AND IMMORAL

AUGUST 14, 2021

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor has slammed the ratification of a bill passed by the Polish Parliament which will make it far harder for Jews to claim restitution on properties appropriated and stolen during the Holocaust era.

"This law is undemocratic, unjust and immoral," Dr. Kantor said. "This is not bringing order to chaos as President Duda claims, it is making legal what should

be illegal and is merely legalising theft. The president had an opportunity to right the wrong created by the parliament, he could have shown moral clarity and leadership, but he chose not to.”

“Moreover, this law will also further highlight Poland’s unique position as the only country in the region which makes Holocaust restitution impossible and runs counter to its international commitments. It is outrageous that someone who survived the Holocaust, who will be in their later years, will still be deprived justice by this cruel, illegitimate and discriminatory law.”

The new legislation will prevent Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust and their heirs who lost property due to asset confiscations during the Communist era from reclaiming their property or receiving compensation for it.

“Poland was where the majority of Jews lived before the war and where most were murdered during the Nazi genocide, Dr. Kantor continued. “All we are asking for is justice and decency, and both are severely compromised by this law.”

THE NEW POLISH RESTITUTION LAW IS DISCRIMINATORY AND IMMORAL, SAYS EJC PRESIDENT KANTOR

JULY 23, 2021

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor has slammed the passing of a bill by the Polish Senate which would make it far harder for Jews to claim restitution on properties appropriated and stolen during the Holocaust era.

“This is not just another law, it is legalised theft, and the language is written in such a way that it implicitly seeks to single out Jews as undeserving of retrieving what was stolen from them,” Dr. Kantor said. “It is not privileging Jews as some claim in Poland, it is disenfranchising them, creating a higher bar than for all others.”

“Moreover, this law will also further highlight Poland’s unique position as the only country in the region which makes Holocaust restitution impossible, and runs counter to its international commitments. It is outrageous that someone who survived the Holocaust, who will be in their latter years, will still be deprived justice by this cruel, illegitimate and discriminatory law.”

The new legislation, which was already adopted by the Polish lower house, would prevent Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust and their heirs who lost property due to asset confiscations during the Communist era from reclaiming their property or receiving compensation for it.

“Poland was where the majority of Jews lived before the war and where most were murdered during the Nazi genocide, Dr. Kantor continued. “All we are asking for is justice and decency, and both are severely compromised by this law.”

EJC CALLS ON POLAND TO PULL BACK FROM UNFAIR, UNJUST AND DISCRIMINATORY RESTITUTION LAW

JUNE 28, 2021

The European Jewish Congress calls on Polish authorities to reject a proposed bill which would make it considerably more difficult for Jews to claim restitution on properties appropriated and stolen during the Holocaust era.

“This bill is unfair and discriminatory and perpetuates the injustice of crimes which the Jews of Poland were the victims,” said Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC.

“Allowing the theft of property from the heirs of Jews who were sent in their millions to Nazi death camps adds further to the trauma of the Holocaust.”

“Poland must truly distance itself from this era, and must enact just restitution to the heirs of its own citizens who lived with and among Poles for hundreds of years and contributed to the country,” Dr. Kantor added.

“What we are currently witnessing is the very opposite of just restitution and leaves Poland as a unique country in the region that still refuses to face its past honestly and with integrity.”

In March, a parliamentary committee proposed a bill that would implement a 2015 Constitutional Tribunal ruling that a time limit be set on challenges to administrative decisions. The draft bill proposes a deadline of 30 years. Poland’s democratic post-Communist era started 32 years ago, in 1989. The bill passed through the lower house of Poland’s parliament, but has yet still to be ratified.

In 2009, Poland signed the Terezin Declaration on Holocaust Era Assets and Related Issues, an agreement to address economic injustice faced by victims of Nazi persecution.

“The Polish Government formally promises that it would restitute Holocaust-era assets stolen from Jews and has now reneged on this promise,” continued Dr. Kantor. “We urge Polish decision-makers to pull back from the brink and reject this shameful, discriminatory and immoral bill.”

ATTACKS ON JEWS DURING RECENT CONFLICT CONFIRMS NECESSITY OF IHRA DEFINITION, SAYS DR. MOSHE KANTOR

JUNE 16, 2021

During an event held by Tel Aviv University commemorating the fifth anniversary of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress, said the recent rise in antisemitism during the conflict between Israel and Hamas demonstrates why the definition with its examples are so vital.

“We are seeing today one of the worst waves of antisemitism in recent times. Antisemitism runs wild on social media and in the streets and hatred of Israel is used to practice hate on all Jews,” Dr. Kantor said. “Nothing so clearly demonstrates the importance and value of the IHRA definition than the clear examples we are witnessing today linking hatred of Israel with hatred of Jews.

“When angry mobs gather in front of a synagogue, when rabbis are targeted, when an antisemitic convoy rides through Jewish neighborhoods, one thing becomes very clear.

Just as the definition makes no distinction in its manifestations of Jew hate, neither do the antisemites themselves.”

The event, held by The Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry, was titled “Who Is an Antisemite? The Polemic and Its Significance”, and brought together leading academics, experts and activists in the arena of antisemitism for a symposium to talk about the significance and necessity of the definition.

“The debate around antisemitism and anti-Zionism is a bit like the one about the chicken and the egg. The result is the same, so it does not really matter which

came first,” Dr. Kantor continued. For antisemites, Israel is the “collective Jew”. What better way therefore to target hatred towards the maximum number of Jews than to target the State of Israel?”

“If there was any doubt of what antisemites think of the IHRA definition, we can see that it has been the target of attacks and attempts to come up with alternatives, which focus on protecting antisemites and not Jews. Thanks to the IHRA definition, we now have an international, widely accepted standard on what constitutes antisemitism.”

Dr. Kantor spoke about the growing success of the IHRA definition and said that 450 leading organizations, including 28 countries, have adopted or endorsed the Working Definition of Antisemitism.

EJC SENDS ITS HEARTFELT CONGRATULATIONS ON THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT IN ISRAEL

JUNE 14, 2021

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) sends its heartfelt congratulations to the State of Israel and its people on the formation of a new government. Diaspora Jewry is gratified to see such a wide government representing many different views and communities in Israel.

Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, also wishes the greatest of success to Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Alternate Prime Minister Yair Lapid on their new positions and hopes that they will guide Israel wisely and continue working closely with Diaspora Jewry. He looks forward to working closely with them and all the members of the new government.

In his personal letter to Prime Minister Bennett, Dr. Kantor wrote: “Over many years now you have served the Jewish state with distinction, innovation and commitment and I feel sure that your skills and devotion in bringing together elements from across the political spectrum in the government which will undoubtedly lead to the betterment of all in our one Jewish state, working in unity for the goals all lovers of Israel truly share.”

Dr. Kantor would also like to thank outgoing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for all of his hard work and achievements on behalf of Israel and world Jewry, and for his close attention to the bonds that unite Jews around the world.

MAJOR INTERNATIONAL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS ISSUE RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMBAT ANTISEMITISM AND TO FOSTER JEWISH LIFE IN EUROPE

JUNE 2, 2021

Major international Jewish organizations today presented the European Commission with recommendations to combat antisemitism and to foster Jewish life, ahead of the publication of the European Union's first-ever strategy to combat Jew-hatred.

The European Jewish Congress (EJC), the World Jewish Congress (WJC), B'nai B'rith International (BBI), the American Jewish Committee Transatlantic Institute (AJC-TAI), The European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ), the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ), B'nai B'rith Europe (BBE), and CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe agreed that the European Commission must respond to the dangerous spike in antisemitic attacks.

All the groups recognize and applaud the sustained efforts in recent years to curb this age-old scourge and expect the European Commission to widen and deepen its work in the upcoming EU strategy, which was announced by European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas earlier this year.

The recommendations build on the Council Declaration on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across policy areas, adopted unanimously by all EU member states in December 2020, and make concrete proposals for a wide spectrum of EU policy portfolios.

Recommendations include:

- Facilitating the recognition, monitoring of antisemitic incidents.
- Providing heightened security and victim support and ensure the judicial system robustly prosecutes antisemitic hate crimes.
- Integrating the fight against antisemitism into the EU's integration and inclusion agenda, digital policy and its mandate in the field of education.
- Strengthening the existing legal framework to protect essential Jewish practices such as religious slaughter and male circumcision.

- Educating about Europe's rich Jewish cultural heritage.
- Safeguarding the memory of the Holocaust against trivialization and distortion.
- Promoting the fight against antisemitism in European external action, including in international partnerships, political and human rights dialogues with third countries, and in the EU's neighborhood and enlargement process.

We look forward to continued engagement with the European Commission to see these recommendations become part of the future EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life, as well as help to raise awareness and serve as a useful roadmap in the coming years.

EJC CONGRATULATES INCOMING PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL ISAAC HERZOG

JUNE 2, 2021

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) extends its warmest congratulations to Isaac Herzog, on his election by the Knesset as Israel's eleventh President.

"In securing the largest ever vote among Knesset members for his election as president, Isaac Herzog has once again demonstrated his openness and connection to all strands of Israeli society. He is a man who throughout his career has always sought consensus and unity and we feel sure that he will use these assets of his character in the service of Israel and the Jewish people in his new role". Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, said.

President-elect Herzog has worked tirelessly throughout his political career with Jewish communities in Europe and around the world and has contributed enormously to positive relations between Israel and the Diaspora, most recently reflected in his service as head of the Jewish Agency.

"As the son of an Irish Jewish immigrant to Israel, we know that President-elect Herzog is attuned to the reality, beauty and challenges of European Jewry. We have no doubt that President-elect Herzog will continue working closely with European Jewry." Dr Kantor added.

The European Jewish Congress, the representative umbrella organization of European Jewry, looks forward to working with President-elect Herzog in continuing to enhance the ties that so closely bind Diaspora communities with

our Jewish state and to his valued contribution to fighting the growing surge of antisemitism and attacks on Israel, the national homeland of the Jewish People.

EUROPEAN JEWISH CONGRESS STRONGLY CONDEMNS ATTACKS ON GERMAN SYNAGOGUES

MAY 13, 2021

The European Jewish Congress is angered and shocked by attacks on synagogues and the defacing of a Holocaust memorial in apparent targeting of European Jewish communities in the context of heightened tensions in the Middle East.

“Attacks on Jews and Jewish targets are always motivated by antisemitism, no matter the attempt to contextualise them with geopolitical events 3,000 miles away,” EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor said.

“Once again, we see the spreading of hateful and false narratives about Israel and its right to defend itself against Hamas terror attacks fuelling hate and attacks on Jews in Europe,” Dr. Kantor added.

On Tuesday, rocks were thrown at windows of a synagogue in Berlin and an Israeli flag burned while a similar flag burning incident took place outside a synagogue in Munster. In addition, a fire was lit on top of a stone memorial for a synagogue destroyed in Dusseldorf, and in Gelsenkirchen police broke down a mob of 180 people gathered outside the synagogue chanting antisemitic threats.

“We strongly condemn the attempts to transpose and expand the current attacks on the Jewish state to Jewish communities in Europe. We call on law enforcement agencies in Germany and across Europe at this delicate time of tension to provide the necessary protection for our communities and to adopt an unequivocal policy of zero tolerance to the purveyors of hate,” Dr. Kantor said.

“We sincerely hope and pray that the violent attacks in Israel will cease as soon as possible and that both Israelis and Palestinians can return soon to normality and peace safe from the ravages of terror organisations,” he concluded.

EJC EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL AS IT IS BEING ATTACKED

MAY 11, 2021

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) expresses its full solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Israel as the country continues to suffer rocket bombardment and attacks from Hamas terrorists.

“No country can allow violent attacks of this sort on its citizens and we stand fully behind the Israeli Government in its defensive actions to free itself from these ongoing threats,” EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor said.

“In Jerusalem, no other rulers in history have allowed so much freedom of prayer for all peoples and religions as Israel. There should be backing and support for Israel within the international community and particularly from fellow democracies in Europe when this is threatened. Rioting, incitement and violence is not prayer and regardless of where it takes place, law enforcement authorities should be able to provide security and order for all,” Dr. Kantor added.

EJC SAYS LATEST RISE IN FAR-RIGHT INCIDENTS IN GERMANY SHOULD RAISE ALARM

MAY 4, 2021

The European Jewish Congress expresses alarm at the latest figures released by German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer which show that the number of crimes committed by far-Right extremists in Germany rose last year to its highest level since WWII.

“These figures demonstrate that far-Right and neo-Nazi ideologies are no longer on the fringes but is growing, and it is not remaining behind screens but is manifesting itself in violence and bloodshed,” EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor said.

“This is a wake-up call, not just for Germany, but for the whole world. These figures should ring alarm bells, because we are seeing similar trends across the Western world.”

"We can no longer think that it is a few 'lone wolves' and sporadic attacks, but a growing movement that needs to be combatted and suppressed before it grows into something even more threatening."

According to Minister Seehofer, German police recorded 23,604 crimes of a far-right nature last year in Germany, a jump of over five percent on the previous year, and the highest figure since records began in 2001.

"Right-wing extremism remains the biggest threat to our country," said Minister Seehofer as he presented the figures at a press conference.

EJC MOURNS MOUNT MERON TRAGEDY VICTIMS

APRIL 30, 2021

The European Jewish Congress and all its communities are deeply shocked and saddened to learn today of the terrible tragedy at the tomb of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai at Mount Meron in Israel, where thousands of people had gathered to celebrate Lag Ba'Omer.

Our hearts are with all the families who lost their loved ones, and we send prayers and thoughts for a full recovery to all those who are injured.

May the memory of the victims be a blessing.

EJC APPLAUDS EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECISION TO CENSURE UNRWA OVER ANTISEMITISM IN ITS TEXTBOOKS

APRIL 29, 2021

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) welcomes and applauds the European Parliament's resolution expressing concern at the "hate speech and violence taught in Palestinian schools" run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

Among the demands in the resolution were that there should be a review of the teaching materials to ensure hate and antisemitism are not taught, that UNRWA should publish its teaching materials on an open source, and that EU funding should be conditional on the content complying with UNESCO standards of peace, tolerance, coexistence, and non-violence.

The resolution, adopted as part of a report presented for the European Parliament's annual budget discharge, calls for a review of teaching materials used in UNRWA-run schools to ensure hate and antisemitism are not taught, for these materials to be published on an open source, and for EU funding to be conditional on their content complying with UNESCO standards of peace, tolerance, coexistence, and non-violence.

"This decision is a vital step towards a peaceful resolve to the conflict and a better future for both Israelis and Palestinians," Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, said.

"Incitement to hatred and violence is by far the greatest obstacle to ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There can be no peace with those who are taught to hate. Meaningful peace will only be achieved when there is no more hate, violence and bloodshed."

"This resolution shows the importance of promoting conditionality in the EU's external action in the service of peace, and we call on all UNRWA funders to follow this recommendation," Dr. Kantor concluded."

EJC PARTNERS WITH CHRISTIAN, MUSLIM AND BUDDHIST COMMUNITIES IN EU-AWARDED GRANT TO PROTECT HOUSES OF WORSHIP

APRIL 22, 2021

The European Jewish Congress' (EJC) Security and Crisis Centre (SACC) has been awarded around €3 million grant by the European Commission to assist in the protection of houses of worship in Europe.

The award is a result of a partnership with three well-established organizations from the Christian, Muslim and Buddhist communities, the Conference of European Churches, Faith Matters and the European Buddhist Union. The outcome of this partnership is the project 'Safer and Stronger Communities in Europe (SASCE)'.

The SASCE project is a multi-layered approach to dramatically increase security in and around places of worship, as well as within and between Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and Jewish communities. It has been awarded by the European Commission's Internal Security Fund – Police (ISF-P) mechanism.

For the first time, representatives of the four religious communities will be working together on a common project to enhance security, which will be funded by the European Commission.

“We are delighted that the European Commission has given a vote of confidence in our SACC model and together with our partners we will see that places of worship in Europe are better safeguarded,” Dr Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, said.

“Solidarity and cooperation among communities of faith is vital at this point, because an attack on one community is an attack on all communities. As we have seen in the attack on the synagogue of Halle on 9 October 2019, once the perpetrator realized he would not succeed killing Jews, he sought to kill Muslims at a nearby restaurant.”

“Having Muslim, Christian, Buddhist and Jewish communities standing together and sharing best practices for the safety of each other will help build bridges and can make for a more united, peaceful and tolerant Europe.” Dr Kantor added.

As part of this initiative, the four partner organizations will develop tools to strengthen security awareness and crisis management. These tools will be disseminated by a network of ambassadors through trainings and briefings for religious communities, as well as through wider communication campaigns. In addition, as part of a pilot, 1,000 Jewish communal buildings across Europe will be equipped with new technology to increase their protection level.

The project will also strengthen trust and cooperation between civil society and national authorities, facilitating formalized channels of communication between community leadership and public enforcement authorities.

“We hope that this will be the beginning of a long-term process of inter-faith cooperation on security, that will have very positive effects for religious communities across the EU,” Dr Kantor concluded.

EJC PRESIDENT CONDEMNS “MASSIVE FAILURE OF JUSTICE” IN SARAH HALIMI CASE

APRIL 19, 2021

EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor has sharply criticised a judgment by the French Cour de Cassation, the country’s highest court, in the murder case of Sarah Halimi, a 65-year-old Jewish physician and schoolteacher.

The Court ruled that Kobili Traoré, who on 4 April 2017 broke into Ms. Halimi’s apartment in Paris, beat her, tortured her and threw her out of her window into her death, could not be held criminally responsible.

In the Court’s view, Mr. Traoré had found himself in the middle of a “sharp delusional puff” triggered by the regular consumption of cannabis, following which there was “no doubt that he could no longer be held to be in control of his actions.”

“This is a massive failure of the French justice system and sets a very dangerous precedent for the rule of law and for the whole society, with potential negative consequences reverberating across Europe,” Dr. Kantor said.

“Not only will a dangerous recidivist criminal be soon out in the streets, by declaring the illegal use of drugs an exonerating factor in a violent hate crime, the court has effectively granted a get-out-of-jail free card to all potential perpetrators,” he stated.

After taking Sarah Halimi’s life, Kobili Traoré was seen by witnesses shouting: “Allahu Akbar, I killed the demon!” and stated that he had felt “oppressed” by the sight of a Torah in his victim’s home.

“While the Court eventually established the perpetrator’s indisputable antisemitic motivation, it showed a staggering lack of courage and insight in failing to regard this as the essential element of the case, as opposed to his use of cannabis,” Dr. Kantor added.

“In the words of Francis Kalifat, the President of the Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions (CRIF) ‘the court has deprived Sarah Halimi’s family of the closure they deserve and deprived the people of France of an essential test case in the fight against antisemitism.’”

"We join the French Jewish community and President Emmanuel Macron and call on the French National Assembly to amend the relevant legal provisions regarding criminal responsibility and prevent this unfair denial of justice from occurring to anyone else," Dr. Kantor continued.

"Europe's Jewish communities stand in solidarity with the Halimi family in the face of this prolonged and painful ordeal, Dr. Kantor concluded. "The family's lawyers have said that they will refer the matter to the European Court of Human Rights, where they will at last hopefully find justice."

"THE PANDEMIC HAS CREATED THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS WHERE ANTISEMITISM THRIVES," MOSHE KANTOR WARNED AT THE RELEASE OF ANTISEMITISM WORLDWIDE REPORT

APRIL 7, 2021

The significant rise in extremism and the widespread increase in antisemitic conspiracy theories over the last year could have profound effects on Jewish communities in a post-Pandemic world, Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress, said at the release of the Annual Report on Antisemitism Worldwide 2020, by the Kantor Center at Tel Aviv University.

"2020 was a year of social disorder, and deep global polarization. The pandemic has created the social conditions where antisemitism, racism and extremism thrive," Dr. Kantor said.

"In the past year, conspiracy theories have spread about Jews, the Jewish people or the state of Israel, as being behind the pandemic, or profiting from it," he added. "The constant focus on the role of Jews behind global events shows that antisemitism, as the center of conspiracy theories, has not gone away."

While fewer physical attacks took place, because of lockdowns and severe restrictions, far more hate against Jews was spread online where accusing Jews and Israel for the Coronavirus was easily spread, resulting in the expansion of extremist groups.

Dr. Kantor also expressed concern at the effect on people, and particular the younger generation, of the spread of online hate.

"Young people have been forced to stay indoors during an important part of their formative years, while being exposed 24/7 to online antisemitism, manipulation and disinformation. Dr. Kantor said.

"We must do more to engage with young people through the tools that they themselves use as primary sources of information on social media and in the digital world," he added.

According to the report, in most countries a decrease was observed in violent incidents, attacks on both people and property and threats and arson, but the number of attacks against Jewish sites and communal property increased.

- The number of violent antisemitic incidents decreased by 18.6%, from 456 incidents in 2019 to 371 in 2020, due to lockdowns.
- In addition, the number of physical injuries decreased by 37.1%, from 170 in 2019 to 107 in 2020, and damage to private property was also reduced by 35.4%, 130 to 84 incidents, simply because people mostly stayed at home.
- However, a rise of 24.7% was observed in desecrations of Jewish cemeteries and vandalizing of Holocaust memorials and other Jewish monuments – from 77 to 96 incidents in 2020, because these sites are open and unprotected.
- The number of vandalized synagogues also increased, by 18.9%, from 53 to 63. Most recently, the synagogue of Norrköping, Sweden, was desecrated by Neo-Nazis, on the first night of Passover.

A rise was registered in Ukraine, and a decline in Australia, the UK and especially in France and Canada.

Worrying trends continued in Germany and the USA. In Germany, a rise was recorded in the total number of incidents, with the opposition to vaccines generating comparisons to the Holocaust, and continued desecration of Jewish memorials and cemeteries.

In the US, antisemitic activities on the internet intensified, conspiracy theories have become more rampant and boosted the activities of white supremacists and QAnon.

The pandemic, and measures taken to stem its spread, live restrictions and the vaccines, have led to inappropriate comparisons with Jewish suffering during the Holocaust.

"The use of Holocaust imagery surrounding the Coronavirus has become rampant," Dr. Kantor said. "Lockdowns are being compared to ghettos and

concentration camps; vaccines are being described as wicked medical experiments, and people who refuse these life-saving vaccines are claiming to be persecuted and are wearing yellow stars.”

Dr. Kantor also spoke about the greater attention online hate was receiving, including action taken by some of the social media companies and governments to stem the flow of hate.

The good news is thanks to greater oversight and action by the major social media companies, and stronger national legislation against online hate, the number of antisemitic incidents on the main platforms has decreased,” Dr. Kantor said.

“However, while these responses are welcome and necessary, they will not stop online hatred by themselves. As the report shows, hate will simply move further underground to other platforms.”

The report also shows that in the US a gradual rise in violent incidents has been observed for several years, reaching 119 this year, and Germany also saw a significant escalation, of 24% in the total number of criminal offences motivated by antisemitism, reaching 2,275 (compared to 1,839 in 2019) – the highest number recorded since 2001 – including 59 violent incidents. In both countries, vandalism accounted for most of the incidents.

Most incidents occurred in countries with large Jewish communities: the US, Canada, the UK, Australia, France and Germany. In all other countries, with the exception of Ukraine, less than 10 incidents (per country) occurred in 2020.

EJC PRESIDENT KANTOR CONGRATULATES GREECE ON 200 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

MARCH 24, 2021

European Jewish Congress (EJC) President Dr. Moshe Kantor congratulated the Hellenic Republic ahead of the two-hundredth anniversary of its independence on March 25th 2021.

“On this joyous anniversary of 200 years of the fulfilment of freedom and democracy in Greece, we extend our warmest congratulations to the Greek people,” Dr. Kantor said.

“Greece has always been very proud of its ancient and vibrant Jewish community, whose rich tradition is a gift to the Jewish world,” Dr. Kantor added.

“For their part, Jewish Greeks have played an integral role in public life in the country, distinguishing themselves in various societal fields, such as science, culture, and the arts, and contributing to the rich mosaic that is the Greek nation.”

“We will never forget how during the darkest hour of the Holocaust, which saw the near-destruction of Greek Jewry, many fellow Greeks protected their Jewish neighbours, and especially, we will never forget the courage of the 357 Greek Righteous Among the Nations.”

“Throughout the centuries, Greece has been a beacon for humanity, as the cradle of democracy, philosophy, and Western civilization. Today, it continues to lead the way in various fields, including in the fight against antisemitism, and fostering international cooperation.”

“On behalf of Europe’s Jewish communities, we wish the people of Greece a happy celebration,” Dr. Kantor concluded.

EJC WELCOMES EUROPEAN ANTI-RACISM SUMMIT

MARCH 15, 2021

The European Jewish Congress, federating the national representative organisations of Jewish communities across the European continent and including all the member states of the European Union, strongly welcomes the Commission’s Anti-Racism Action Plan and the holding of the European Anti-Racism Summit, a seminal event to enhance anti-racism policies in Europe.

As Jews, victims of racism stretching back centuries in European societies, we stand in full solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Black, ethnic and religious minority communities and with all those who are experiencing and have experienced racism, intolerance, and discrimination.

Racism manifests itself in discrimination and hatred based on ethnicity, culture, “race” and religion. Jewish communities experience antisemitism resulting from all these racism specificities. It is for minorities experiencing racism alone to define their oppression and the specific sources of it.

Racism has pernicious effects not only on those directly affected by violent racist acts but also in the structured and continued denial of equality and opportunity to people of Asian and African descent, Muslims, Jews, Roma people and other minority groups across many relevant policy areas. These include but are not restricted to law enforcement, education, housing, health and the labour market.

We therefore welcome initiatives, particularly in the education, cultural and sports sectors, to highlight such forms of abuse and the structural racism, which allows them.

Jews know well the effects of structural and institutional racism having experienced them across European society for many centuries, forced to wear distinctive signs, excluded from educational and cultural institutions and indeed banished from almost every European country over the last 800 years. Even post-Enlightenment, Jews were continually denied expression, organisation and rights, culminating in the mass genocidal act of the Shoah, which wiped out half of European Jewry.

Antisemitism and the structures, which allow it, has far from disappeared from European society. While the physical ghetto walls have come down, there are still key areas in which Jews remain de facto excluded. There are also geographical areas in Europe where the presence of Jews or the wearing of Jewish distinctive signs or mode of dress can and does lead to violent antisemitic attacks.

Similarly, there remain areas of the public education system where Jews experience discomfort, abuse and discrimination in both schools and the higher education sector, while far too often law enforcement structures fail to recognise the centrality of antisemitic motive in violent crimes against Jews.

We are aware that other ethnic and religious minorities have similar experiences, we side with and aim to cooperate with all of them in our determination to address all forms of racism, discrimination and intolerance.

The fight against racism must always start by listening to the lived experiences of discriminated groups and the fight against racism must include at all levels and structures of European institutions the representative civil society organisations of minority groups who should be the driving force behind the agenda of the Anti-Racism Action Plan.

The European Commission and the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council must encourage full and coordinated national action plans against racism.

We look forward to a European Anti-Racism Summit which results in concomitant and real commitments from the Member States in support of the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan.

EJC PRESIDENT KANTOR PRAISES THE POPE FOR IMPROMPTU VISIT TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

FEBRUARY 22, 2021

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor praised Pope Francis who on Saturday visited a Holocaust survivor in her Rome apartment to pay tribute to all those who suffered from what he called “the craziness of Nazi populism.”

“The Pontiff’s message is vital in an age of rising populism and especially at a time of mass appropriation of the Holocaust over the last year,” Dr. Kantor said. “Once again showing leadership and compassion in honouring the memory of the victims of the Shoah, asking for forgiveness again on behalf of humanity, raising awareness of the enduring task of keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive, and fostering Jewish-Christian relations.”

The Pope rarely makes these types of visits, but wanted to meet with Edith Bruck, who survived life in Nazi-run death camps during World War II and later settled in Italy, after reading an interview with her recently in the Vatican newspaper.

“It is precisely during these moments of global crisis and fear that we need to hear from leaders a strong and clear message of hope, compassion and against hate,” Dr. Kantor continued. “I was honoured to hear directly from the Pope last year about his commitment to Holocaust memory and his commitment to combat antisemitism.”

Last February, Dr. Kantor held a private meeting with Pope Francis in the Vatican. The two spoke about working together to meet moral and ethical challenges, in particular because of the need to protect younger generations from extremist ideology.

At the meeting, Dr. Kantor bestowed the 2020 Golden Vision award on Pope Francis as a token of appreciation for his message of brotherhood between Jews and Christians that is a living testimony of love and trust in the future of humanity, and his unrelenting commitment to younger generations and promoting solutions to the moral and ethical challenges of our time.

The Golden Vision award is the highest award of the European Jewish Congress that is bestowed annually to two personalities for their outstanding intellectual contribution to a more inclusive world where antisemitism is not tolerated.

AT IHRD EVENT, DR. MOSHE KANTOR CALLS ON EU MEMBER STATES TO ENSURE THAT HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS RECEIVE COVID-19 VACCINE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

JANUARY 25, 2021

During a joint International Holocaust Remembrance Day event, co-hosted by the European Commission and the European Jewish Congress (EJC), held online today, EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor called on the member states of the European Union to ensure that Holocaust survivors have access to a Covid-19 vaccine as soon as possible.

"We have all been lost during the current pandemic, but the survivors of the Holocaust even more so," Dr. Kantor said. "Throughout their lives, they have shown mighty strength of spirit, but in the current crisis, many have sadly died alone and in pain, or are now fighting for their lives, and many others are suffering from extreme isolation. We have a duty to survivors, to ensure that they are able to live their last years in dignity, without fear, and in the company of their loved ones."

"Therefore, I call on European leaders to ensure that Holocaust survivors have access as soon as possible to a safe and effective vaccination and with the highest priority."

At the event, Dr. Kantor also spoke about how during the pandemic, hate, extremism and conspiracy theories have also spread globally.

"As we pay tribute to the victims of the biggest tragedy in history, we must not forget the fundamental lesson that in times of crisis, extremism can rise rapidly," Dr. Kantor said. "The pandemic has created the social conditions where

antisemitism and extremism thrive. The human mind, like the human body is fragile to mutating viruses. And so are our democracies and our shared values of human rights and freedoms."

"We have a responsibility to prevent the spread of hate speech and conspiracy theories, and I am pleased that the European Union and Member States are finally addressing this new threat by recognising that antisemitism needs to be fought across all policy areas." Also speaking at the event was Vice-President of the European Commission Margaritis Schinas.

"This year, against the backdrop of the pandemic, we are all asked to find new forms of remembrance," said VP Schinas. "It is a painful reminder of **HOW** incredible a privilege it is for our generation to be able to listen to the first-hand accounts of those who directly experienced the tragedy of the Holocaust. We have a duty to listen. To remember. But also, a duty to act decisively against antisemitism in its contemporary forms."

Vice President Schinas was in conversation with Tomi Reichental, a survivor of Bergen-Belsen, on the lessons of the Holocaust for 21st century Europe, new forms of remembrance, concepts of atonement and reconciliation, and our common duty to speak up and counter Holocaust denial and distortion. The conversation was moderated by EJC Director of European Affairs Ariella Woitchik.

Excerpts from the film "Close to Evil" were also shown at the event. The film is the compelling story of Reichental's quest to meet one of the SS women who held him captive in Bergen-Belsen. The documentary has won prizes at the Galway Film Fleadh and the Irish Film Institute's "Stranger than Fiction" Festival and was screened on RTE in 2014.

EJC WELCOMES PRACTICAL HANDBOOK ON THE IHRA DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

JANUARY 8, 2021

European Jewish Congress (EJC) President Dr. Moshe Kantor welcomed the publication of a handbook for the practical use of the working definition of antisemitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) as a key tool in the fight against anti-Jewish hatred in Europe.

"It is fundamentally important to give governments and security agencies the necessary guidelines to implement the IHRA definition so that it has practical use to physically protect Jewish communities from antisemitism," Dr. Kantor said.

"We welcome the publication of this guide, at a time when antisemitic conspiracy theories and the targeting of Jews is spreading across our continent."

The handbook, published by the European Commission in cooperation with IHRA, illustrates good practices in the application of the definition and offers a checklist for its good use across different policy areas, including law enforcement, the judiciary and educational institutions.

"We have drawn attention for many years to the problem of prosecutors and police officers not being able to correctly identify antisemitic incidents," Dr. Kantor added.

"This document finally takes the IHRA definition into the realm of practical application. Each of the examples of the definition is illustrated through real documented antisemitic incidents in Europe, so it is substantially more than mere theory and a clear expression of the lived experience of our communities as they encounter Jew hate."

The handbook also lists a series of good practices across Europe for the implementation of the definition, such as the Practical Guide to Judaism for law enforcement, published jointly by the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) and the EJC's Security and Crisis Centre (SACC by EJC).

EJC PRESIDENT KANTOR CALLS EU COURT OF JUSTICE RULING "A HEAVY BLOW TO JEWISH LIFE IN EUROPE"

DECEMBER 17, 2020

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor has slammed the ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) which allows member states to permit the requirement of stunning before religious slaughter of animals for meat, as a fundamental attack on the basic rights of Jewish religious expression and practice.

The Court was responding to the question on a preliminary ruling by the Belgian regions of Flanders and Wallonia (and, by extension, other European authorities) to make EU-law based religious slaughter exception meaningless by banning religious slaughter.

"The right to practice our faith and customs, one which we have been assured over many years was granted under European law, has been severely undermined by this decision," Dr. Kantor said.

"This ruling is a heavy blow to Jewish life in Europe and in essence tells Jews that our practices are no longer welcome. Telling Jews that their ways are not welcome is just a short step from telling Jews that we are no longer welcome."

"We will continue to fight this tragic decision", Dr. Kantor added, "Europe's Jewish communities will not rest until our fundamental rights are asserted and protected under the full weight of European law."

"There is no justice in this ruling which even Advocate General (AG) to the CJEU Gerard Hogan said was against the rights of religious minorities in his opinion to the court." Dr Kantor concluded.

Hogan had, in September, in his official opinion to the court, called to "respect the deeply held religious beliefs of adherents to the Muslim and Jewish faiths by allowing for the ritual slaughter of animals in this manner."

Yohan Benizri, president of the Belgian Federation of Jewish Organisations (CCOJB), the governing body of Belgian Jewry, and vice president of the European Jewish Congress also decried the decision.

"The CJEU's decision to ignore the AG's recommendation in this case and thus allow the ban on religious slaughter is not only disappointing, but undemocratic," Benizri said. "No democracy can exist when its citizens are denied basic human and civil rights. We plan to pursue every legal recourse to right this wrong."

EJC WELCOMES REESTABLISHMENT OF FULL TIES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND MOROCCO

DECEMBER 11, 2020

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) has welcomed and lauded the reestablishment of full ties and warm relations between the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Morocco.

"This is an important day, especially given the long ties between Morocco and the Jewish People," Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, said. "Morocco has always been very proud of its Jewish heritage and community, and this is a natural step. This historic occasion may prove to be an extremely important development in future relations between Muslim and Jewish communities of Moroccan descent in Europe and around the world."

"We would like to congratulate President Donald Trump, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and King Mohammed VI on this bold move. We hope all the nations of the region will join hands in tolerance and reconciliation, and join the circle of peace which is ever expanding."

Morocco became the fourth Arab state to normalise ties with Israel in recent months, following the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Sudan.

EJC PRESIDENT APPLAUDS EU DECLARATION TO FIGHT ANTISEMITISM AT ALL LEVELS

DECEMBER 3, 2020

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor applauds the European Union Council Declaration on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across policy-areas, adopted unanimously by EU member states.

"This is an important decision, one that appreciates the sad growth of antisemitism and how it not only targets Jews, but is corrosive for any society," Dr. Kantor said. "The EU firmly states that antisemitism is against European values and commits itself to a holistic program to eradicate it from the continent."

"We are delighted that our strong message that fighting antisemitism robustly at all levels, that we have consistently delivered in our meetings and activities, is received."

"The declaration, adopted by the German presidency of the Council, affirms several principles, including that antisemitism is an attack on European values, that protecting Jewish life and making it more visible as part of Europe's identity is essential, and that it is necessary to combat antisemitism head-on in all its forms, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic."

"The importance that the EU is placing on protecting and emboldening Jewish life is also very important," Dr. Kantor continued. "Jews have been a part of Europe for millennia and continue to contribute at all levels, so it is very gratifying to hear that our leaders will ensure that Jewish life will not only be protected but making it more visible."

EJC PRESIDENT SLAMS DECISION BY AUSTRIAN FREEDOM PARTY TO APPOINT ANTISEMITE TO UPPER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT

NOVEMBER 25, 2020

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor has expressed outrage after the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) appointed former foreign-affairs spokesman Johannes Hübner to the Bundesrat, which is the equivalent of Austria's Senate. In 2017, Hübner aborted an attempt to run for parliament in 2017, after an antisemitic comment he shared at a far-Right event in Germany the previous year was aired.

"The Freedom Party have claimed that they have left their antisemitic past behind them and have recently tried to revive their reputation, but this appointment represents a huge step backwards," Dr. Kantor said. "It is unconscionable that a renowned antisemite would be given such a respectable position."

"We call on the Freedom Party to rescind this decision and to once again turn away from its sordid antisemitic past," Kantor concluded.

Oskar Deutsch, President of the Jewish community of Vienna (IKG), added "the political return of Mr. Hübner is a confirmation of the lack of credibility of the Freedom Party. This is exactly what happened with Udo Landbauer, who resigned after his student fraternity's Nazi song books were seized, and then came back as a regional party leader."

EJC REMEMBERS RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS AS A TOWERING FIGURE OF JUDAISM

NOVEMBER 8, 2020

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) expresses its deepest condolences to the family of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks ZTz"l and to Anglo Jewry on the passing of the former Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth.

"Rabbi Sacks' passing is a devastating blow for world Jewry as he was a towering figure of Judaism, who represented the Jewish People's finest face to the outside world," Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, said. "He resolutely defended Judaism, the Jewish People and the State of Israel while demonstrating a distinct commitment to compassion, truth and tolerance within Jewish thought and practice."

"His teachings will live on through his countless sermons, numerous books and wise thoughts that will continue to illuminate Judaism for generations to come. May his family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem."

EUROPEAN JEWISH CONGRESS CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE BIDEN ON HIS ELECTION VICTORY

NOVEMBER 8, 2020

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) sends its congratulations to U.S. President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr on his victory in the American presidential elections.

"President-elect Joe Biden has demonstrated a strong friendship with the State of Israel and the Jewish People throughout his decades in public office," Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the EJC, said. "We look forward to working with him, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris and the incoming administration on issues of concern to the Jewish community."

"We would also like to thank President Donald Trump for his years of deep support for the State of Israel, including securing peace agreements and helping build relations with countries in the Middle East. We also remember and cherish the emotional address Vice President Mike Pence gave at the Fifth World Holocaust Forum held in Jerusalem earlier in the year."

EUROPEAN JEWISH CONGRESS SHOCKED AND APPALLED AT VIENNA TERROR SHOOTINGS

NOVEMBER 3, 2020

At least three victims were killed and 15 others injured in a series of shootings that started near the Stadttempel synagogue in central Vienna on Monday night.

"These multiple and clearly coordinated terror attacks in central Vienna once again show the threat posed by Islamist terror organisations to European cities. We are appalled by this particular level of murderous hatred which seeks out as many victims as possible on the last night before Austria enforces a lockdown due the Coronavirus," EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor said.

"No place in Europe is immune to terror attacks, and no community exempt from these barbarous acts," Dr. Kantor said. "The initial shooting outside the synagogue in Vienna brings back tragic memories for us as one of the first attacks on Jewish targets in Europe happened at this very spot almost 40 years ago. It reminds us that vigilance, commitment to fighting terror and assertion of our values is a constant necessity to rid Europe of this deadly scourge and it reminds us that terror targets us all."

"We send our deep condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims and our prayers for the speedy recovery of those injured. The Jewish communities of Europe stand in solidarity with the Austrian people at this tragic time," Dr. Kantor concluded.

Also commenting on the attacks, the president of the Jewish community of Vienna (IKG), Oskar Deutsch said: "Our thoughts go out to the victims of the attack and their families. The proximity to our main synagogue strongly suggests an antisemitic motive of the Islamist attacker. But what the incident also shows is that antisemitism, which is inherent in radical Islamism, is not only a threat to Jews, but to all those concerned freedom, democracy and human values."

EUROPEAN JEWISH CONGRESS CONDEMNS BARBARIC TERROR ATTACKS IN FRANCE

OCTOBER 29, 2020

The European Jewish Congress expresses its profound shock and outrage at the horrific terror attacks which took place in Nice and Avignon this morning.

In Nice, three people were murdered by a suspected Islamist terrorist in the centre of the city today in an action believed to replicate the beheading which recently took place in the Paris region against a school teacher. In Avignon, a man wielding a knife attacked a group of police officers. The officers opened fire, killing the assailant.

"We are utterly shocked at the barbarity and sheer evil in these attacks on French citizens and on the French Republic," EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor said.

"These acts, coming so soon after the horrific beheading of a schoolteacher last week and clearly motivated by the same religious extremism, do not exist in a vacuum. Attacks on basic rights to freedom of speech and expression and the tolerance shown to Islamist extremism provides moral support for these acts of terrorism," Dr. Kantor added.

The European Jewish Congress calls upon all European governments to take urgent and radical action to protect all citizens from this new but clearly well-established wave of Islamist terror, which attacks us physically in the streets while simultaneously attempting to undermine our core and collective values of tolerance and freedom of expression."

"As our communities have felt the results of such acts in recent years, Europe's Jewish communities stand in total solidarity with President Macron and the people of France and send our deep condolences to the families of the victims and our thoughts and prayers for a speedy recovery to those injured in this terror attack." Dr. Kantor concluded.

DR. MOSHE KANTOR RE-ELECTED AS EUROPEAN JEWISH CONGRESS PRESIDENT

OCTOBER 27, 2020

Dr. Moshe Kantor was re-elected as President of the European Jewish Congress (EJC) today. Dr. Kantor ran unopposed, in what is seen as a resounding vote of confidence in his leadership by the representatives of Europe's Jewish communities.

Marie van der Zyl, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, was re-elected as Chair of the Council.

"I am honoured and humbled by the support shown in my leadership by Jewish leaders and communities across the continent," Dr. Kantor said. "European Jewry is a thriving force in the global Jewish world, and we remain at the forefront of fighting antisemitism, defending Jewish tradition and reinvigorating Jewish communities and institutions."

In recent months, under Kantor's leadership, the EJC has acted to provide support for Jewish communities and institutions, whether schools, community centers or other organizations vital to European Jewry, faced with the hard challenge of Covid-19.

"These have been very challenging times for European Jews", Dr. Kantor continued. "I witness in my conversations with Jewish leaders, heads of state and decision-makers around the continent that despite the challenges of Covid-19 and rising antisemitism, European Jews are resolute and determined to continue working together to overcome these challenges and strengthen Jewish life in Europe."

During the virtual General Assembly, leaders from 42 European Jewish communities also pledged new action to promote the implementation of the IHRA definition of antisemitism on the national level.

Additionally, European Jewish leaders were briefed on the recent historic Abraham Accords between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and the United States by H.E. Emmanuel Nachshon, Ambassador of Israel to Belgium and Luxembourg, and Nancy Khedouri, senior Jewish member of the National Assembly of Bahrain.

Ms. Khedouri spoke about her nation's historic adoption of the IHRA definition. "This is an important decision which should be welcomed by all. Bahrain is committed to combating all types of hate. I applaud Dr. Kantor's leadership on this and other issues and wish him many more years of concerted activity and success on behalf of the Jewish people."

Katharina von Schnurbein, European Commission Coordinator on combating Antisemitism and fostering Jewish life, congratulated Kantor for his reelection, saying that "The continuous confidence that the Jewish community has put in you once more is a testimony of your strong leadership and commitment, which are so much needed in these challenging times."

"I applaud your dedication for the prosperity and the protection of the European Jewish community by fervently engaging in the fight against antisemitism, and for the remembrance of the Shoah, a cause that you made it your own ever since your first engagement in public activity."

The President of the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF), Francis Kalifat congratulated Dr. Kantor on his re-election: "In these troubling times for Europe, the strong leadership and the enduring commitment shown by Moshe Kantor promoting Holocaust Remembrance, combatting antisemitism and preserving Jewish identity lends European Jews in general, and French Jews in particular, a powerful and respected voice to safeguard our interests," said Mr. Kalifat.

Senior British leaders also congratulated Dr. Kantor and applauded his ongoing work on behalf of European Jewry.

"I was delighted to hear that Dr. Moshe Kantor has been re-elected as President of the European Jewish Congress, put forward by British Jewry for the third consecutive time. This is a great tribute to Moshe for the wonderful work that he has done," said Lord Michael Levy, Life President of Jewish Care and President of JFS.

"Moshe has shown vision, creativity and true leadership over these last years. He has dealt with every crisis in a thoughtful and dignified manner, which has been so important for every country within the framework of the EJC."

"Moshe Kantor is a man of action and deeds not merely words," said Lord John Mann, Independent Advisor to the UK Government on Anti-Semitism. "His leadership has propelled EJC onto the world stage and will be vital in combating the growing scourge of antisemitism in the next years."

"Marie Van der Zyl is one of the women to have battled to the top of Jewish communal leadership, her unique insight will be a welcome and fresh input into the leadership of the EJC."

"Congratulations to Moshe Kantor on his well-deserved election," said Lord Eric Pickles, the UK Special Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues. "His organisation of the World Holocaust Forum earlier this year in Jerusalem was a dignified, moving and very effective way of remembering the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Death Camps. Moshe is known and admired throughout the world as a champion of the truth."

"Marie van der Zyl is also a champion of the truth. I have worked closely with her on our joint endeavour of tackling Antisemitism in the UK. She is respected in government. Her unstinting support for the new Holocaust and Learning Centre next to Parliament makes her a powerful advocate for remembrance," added Lord Pickles.

"I also want to add my congratulations to Marie van der Zyl, for being elected as Chair of the EJC Council," said Lord Levy, "This is particularly poignant for British Jewry as Marie is also President of the Board of Deputies."

EJC PRESIDENT KANTOR APPLAUDS OVERDUE DECISION BY FACEBOOK TO BAN HOLOCAUST DENIAL

OCTOBER 12, 2020

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor has welcomed the decision by Facebook to ban Holocaust denial or distortion, and to better inform the public about the Holocaust.

"This is a long overdue but an important decision," Dr. Kantor said. "Holocaust denial is not legitimate debate and is only used as an expression of hatred for Jews, so this decision is not about anything except limiting hate and antisemitism."

Dr. Kantor, who is also the President of the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, welcomed concerted efforts by governments, IT companies and civil society to counter the proliferation of online hatred conspiracy myths and Holocaust denial.

"At a time where antisemitism is on the rise and knowledge about the Holocaust among young people is alarmingly low, it is crucial that online platforms continue to become part of the solution, not the problem," Dr. Kantor continued.

"This is an issue that the European Jewish Congress has long advocated for, and we thank Facebook for its regular and productive discussions with us and other Jewish organisations, both at the European and global level," Dr. Kantor concluded.

EJC PRESIDENT KANTOR WELCOMES THE BRANDING OF GOLDEN DAWN AS A CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION

OCTOBER 7, 2020

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor has welcomed the landmark decision by a Greek court to brand the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn a criminal organization and declared that senior members of the party were guilty of running a criminal organization.

"This is a welcome and important decision and finally tells the facts as they are, that neo-Nazis like those in Golden Dawn are criminals, pure and simple," Dr. Kantor said. "We hope other nations which allow similar neo-Nazi parties to run in elections and sit in parliaments will likewise proscribe parties which promote racist and hateful ideologies."

"Today is a win for democracy and a defeat for hate and intolerance."

The court case sparked by the 2013 murder of 34-year-old anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas, who was chased down by a mob of Golden Dawn thugs and stabbed to death. The killer, former truck driver Giorgos Roupakias, confessed, but the attack sparked outrage and the charges that Golden Dawn was a paramilitary-style organization that used beatings, intimidation and murder as tactics — all with the knowledge of senior party members who sat in the Hellenic Parliament at the time.

"Thankfully, the Greek people have rejected the Golden Dawn through democratic means, and now the legal system has ensured they cannot regroup and use their typical campaign of intimidation to return to national institutions," Dr. Kantor continued. "This is hopefully the death knell for the Golden Dawn."

EJC CONDEMNS ATTACK ON HAMBURG SYNAGOGUE

OCTOBER 4, 2020

The European Jewish Congress strongly condemns an antisemitic attack that wounded one outside a synagogue in Hamburg. The attack occurred at the Hohe Weide synagogue in the northern German city, where a Jewish youth event was being held on the holiday of Sukkot.

The attacker, who was wearing military gear, had attempted to enter the synagogue, but was prevented from doing so by security staff. He then proceeded to assault a young man with a shovel outside the synagogue. The attacker was immediately apprehended by police.

"We are relieved that a tragedy was avoided, and we are grateful to the security who immediately identified the attacker and prevented him from entering the premises," said EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor.

"This incident, which took place two days after the ransacking of a kosher restaurant in Paris and just a few days away from the anniversary of the deadly Halle attack shows that the threat against Jewish communities in Europe is still imminent and that we cannot let our guard down."

Dr. Kantor added. "Governments must remain vigilant and continue strengthening the security of Jewish communities."

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the Jewish community of Hamburg and with the young victim of this serious incident. We wish him a speedy recovery."

EJC CALLS ON SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW FINLAND'S EXAMPLE AND BAN THE ANTISEMITIC NORDIC RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

The European Jewish Congress (EJC) calls on the governments of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden to follow the recent example of Finland and ban the Neo-Nazi Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM).

"We condemn in the strongest terms the latest string of incidents orchestrated by the NRM on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, where

violent thugs stood outside a synagogue, Jewish institutions were vandalised and antisemitic materials and conspiracy myths were distributed in public areas across the region”, said EJC President Moshe Kantor.

“We call on the relevant authorities to prosecute these incidents with the full force of the law and ensure that Jewish communities are able to practice freely and without fear.”

“The NRM is a criminal organisation spouting a hateful, racist and antisemitic ideology. Its use of violence and intimidation is an essential part of its operations. As such, it poses a serious danger, not only to Jews, but to the very fabric of Scandinavia’s open and democratic societies,” he added.

“The example of Finland, where no major incidents took place on Yom Kippur, shows that only a full ban of the NRM is an effective and appropriate measure to counteract the threat of this vile organisation,” Kantor concluded.

FIVE JEWS WHO MADE A SPLASH IN ISRAEL IN 5780

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

From changing the face of the Middle East to building a world-class cycling team, redefining our social media to recruiting world leaders in the fight against antisemitism – these five men have made an undeniable impact on Israeli life over the past 12 months.

The European Jewish Congress is proud and honoured to announce that Dr. Moshe Kantor has been recognised as one of five Jewish leaders who shaped the year 5780 by the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth and warmly congratulates him for this outstanding recognition.

Also included on the list are Jared Kushner, Senior Advisor to the President of the United States and architect of the historic Abraham Accords with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, and businessman Sylvan Adams, promoter of the Israel Start-Up Nation cycling team.

“Kantor is the man responsible for the biggest event of the year in Israel, the Fifth World Holocaust Forum, held at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem,” read the article, published ahead of Rosh Hashana.

“It was the largest diplomatic event in the country’s history: against the background of rising antisemitism in the world and marking the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp, some 50 heads of state and leaders from around the world arrived in Israel, including French President Emmanuel Macron, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Britain’s Prince Charles.”

In Dr. Kantor’s own words: “We have succeeded in putting the importance of the fight against antisemitism on the world agenda. The next step must be a coordinated and well-designed international plan of action.”

MAJOR JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS LAUNCH UNIFIED POSITION ON TACKLING ANTISEMITISM ONLINE

SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

The European Jewish Congress, along with major Jewish organizations working with the EU institutions – the American Jewish Committee (AJC), B’nai Brith International, B’nai Brith Europe, A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe (CEJI), the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS) and the World Jewish Congress (WJC)– has launched a unified position on tackling antisemitism online, in response to the Digital Services Act consultation by the European Commission.

As the European Union looks to redefine its approach to digital governance under the motto A Europe fit for the Digital Age, maintaining a safe online space, free of hate and incitement must be a key priority.

The joint call offers 10 recommendations for the future legislation to effectively tackle antisemitic content online and demand higher accountability from online platforms and service providers.

Among the demands formulated in an Open letter to European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen are the push for platforms to adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism as part of their community standards, data collection and analysis to better understand the spread of antisemitism online, platform transparency with regard to algorithms, support for civil society actors to be effective parts of the conversation and a call to disincentivize profit stemming from harmful content.

'Antisemitic hate speech and disinformation are proliferating online. The Digital Services Act is a unique opportunity to ensure a safe online space and we urge the European Commission to create an effective framework to combat hatred online and ensure accountability,' said Raya Kalenova, Executive Vice-President and CEO of the European Jewish Congress.

A 2018 Fundamental Rights Agency survey on Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism among Jews in the EU found that 89% of respondents consider antisemitism expressed online as a problem and 80% of those experiencing antisemitic abuse have encountered it online. These worrying statistics have only been further exacerbated by the Covid19 pandemic which has created an environment ripe with disinformation and conspiracies.

A revised EU digital framework must tackle head on the role and responsibility of online platforms and must guarantee users' safety.

EJC PRESIDENT CALLS ON THE PORTUGUESE PARLIAMENT NOT TO HARM THE SEPHARDI CITIZENSHIP LAW

JULY 2, 2020

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor has written to Portugal's President of the Assembly of the Republic Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues, calling on him to ensure that a law passed in 2013 which provides Sephardi Jews with the possibility to apply for Portuguese citizenship is not harmed by recent attempts to pass amendments which would damage the applicability, intention and spirit of the original law.

"I urge you to amend the administrative flaws in the implementation of this historic law without losing sight of, or endangering, what is essential: the opening of a real, achievable path to citizenship of the Portuguese Republic to the descendants of persecuted Portuguese Sephardic Jews," Dr. Kantor wrote. "This act of tolerance and reconciliation is as relevant, symbolic and inspiring to other nations as it was when it was approved five years ago."

In recent years there has been a discernible increase in the number of applications by Sephardi Jews for Portuguese citizenship, and some parliament members have sought ways to stem the numbers, including proposing that applicants must reside in Portugal or have a "effective connection" to the Iberian nation.

"Many of the amendments to the law that have been proposed diminishes what was unique in its wisdom and generosity," Dr. Kantor wrote. "It is wise because it demonstrates Portugal's willingness to turn the lessons of history into a source of reconciliation. It is generous because it demonstrates that, in an age of nationalism, parochialism and intolerance, some countries are willing to share what is most precious – their national community – in order to make that reconciliation a living and lived reality."

"Portugal is rightly praised all over the world, by Jews and non-Jews alike, for this legislation. As a Jewish leader, I often hear about it and how it stands in stark contrast to the rising tide of antisemitism in Europe and beyond." Kantor added.

Dr. Kantor also expressed concerns about voices in Portugal who are using problematic allegations during the debate surrounding amendments to the law.

"We know that the vast majority of people join us in condemning attempts to arouse opposition to the law by making unworthy comments regarding the 'commercialization' of the law", Dr. Kantor continued, "and I call upon the Portuguese people not to fall into the trap of antisemitic stereotypes and old prejudices."

"The Portuguese and Jewish people have long and historic ties, and an ancestry and heritage shared by millions of people in Portugal. I know that with this law and the law to recognize a day of commemoration for the victims of The Inquisition a new and hopeful bridge has been created to reconnect our people after many centuries, and I hope relations will only be strengthened in the years to come."

ANTISEMITIC CHANTS AT ANTI-RACIST MARCH IN PARIS SHOWS HOW WORTHY CAUSE IS BEING HIJACKED TO SPREAD HATE

JUNE 14, 2020

European Jewish Congress (EJC) President Dr. Moshe Kantor called on anti-racist marchers and organisers to ensure that antisemitism is not being adopted by some within their ranks, after large groups of marchers at a rally in Paris's Place de la République on Saturday shouted antisemitic slogans like "dirty Jew".

"The people who claim to march against hate and racism while shouting violent antisemitic statements are hypocrites and acting against the worthy cause of the majority," Dr. Kantor said. "They are trying to hijack the justifiable anger and hurt of anti-racist demonstrators."

"They have shown that they would rather sabotage an important rally for their own hate, displaying their true colours and showing their priorities. They are not anti-hate or anti-racist, they are just antisemites and the authorities should deal with them as people who incite to violence."

In recent days, as demonstrations and marches have taken place across the world in protest against racism and police brutality in the US, small minorities have used it as an excuse to target Jews and Jewish institutions.

"As people with a history of oppression and discrimination, the Jewish people stand shoulder to shoulder with the black community," Dr. Kantor said. "There can be no distractions from this central point."

"Unfortunately, there are those who are using this as an opportunity to spread hate and conspiracy theories about Jews in the hope of swaying the masses against the Jewish community. This is not a time for division, it is a time for unity and solidarity, and anyone who tries to divide and isolate one minority community should be removed from the anti-racist rallies, events and organisations."

KANTOR CENTER ANTISEMITISM WORLDWIDE REPORT 2019 – THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS IS REVIVING 'BLOOD LIBELS' AGAINST JEWS

APRIL 20, 2020

Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress (EJC), said today that already in the first few months since the global breakout of the Coronavirus, there has been a rise in antisemitic manifestations relating to the spread of the disease and the economic recession triggered by the pandemic.

Dr. Kantor was speaking during the release of the Annual Report on Antisemitism Worldwide 2019, by the Kantor Center at Tel Aviv University.

"Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant rise in accusations that Jews, as individuals and as a collective, are behind the spread of the virus or are directly profiting from it," Dr. Kantor said. "The language and imagery used clearly identifies a revival of the medieval 'blood libels' when Jews were accused of spreading disease, poisoning wells or controlling economies."

"Unfortunately, these manifestations are continuing the consistent rise of antisemitism over the last few years, especially online, on the streets and in mainstream society, politics and media."

Some of those spreading these conspiracy theories and 'blood libels' range from far-Right politicians in Europe and America, ultra-conservative pastors in the U.S., far-Right activists, artists and leaders in Iran.

Dr. Kantor added that in addition to dealing with stopping the spread of the virus and with the economic consequences of the crisis, global leaders need to also address the rise of populism and extremism that could result from this crisis. Kantor noted examples from the financial crisis of 2008 and the Great Depression, which led to the rise of fascism and Nazism

"Alongside trying to control the spread of the virus and taking care to lessen the effects of the financial downturn, the international community should not ignore the societal and political crisis that is already starting to emerge," Dr. Kantor said.

“With the increased use of social media, especially in places where direct social contact is more and more suppressed, easy solutions will be spread that involve conspiracy theories and hate, providing simplistic answers for the growing anxiety among of the general public.”

“As unemployment numbers will begin to spiral out of control, more people may seek out scapegoats, spun for them by conspiracy theorists. Our leaders need to address the problem of growing extremism and hate now, to get ahead of the problem that is already at our door.”

Referring to the statistics compiled by the Kantor Center, Dr. Kantor noted that in 2019 we saw a dramatic rise of 18% in antisemitic incidents, whether violent, verbal or visual, continuing the steady rise of antisemitism of the last few years.

The total number of severe and violent incidents monitored worldwide in 2019 was 456, compared to 387 incidents in 2018.

The number of persons physically attacked also rose in 2019 by almost 30 (a rise of 22%), life-endangering threats by 40 (an increase of 47%), and an additional 25 private properties were damaged (a 24% rise). Additionally, seven Jews were killed in antisemitic incidents last year.

“Not only have the numbers increased substantially but the worst types of attacks grew, which should be extremely disturbing for leaders and authorities around the world,” Dr. Kantor added.

“It was precisely because of these worrying and dangerous trends that we gathered 50 world leaders in Jerusalem during January at the Fifth World Holocaust Forum,” said Dr. Kantor, who is also President of the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, and the initiator of the historic event at Yad Vashem on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. “We succeeded in placing the importance of combatting antisemitism on to the global agenda. The next step must be a concerted and coordinated international action plan.”

MESSAGE FROM MOSHE KANTOR

APRIL 7, 2020

In a video message published today, EJC President Dr. Moshe Kantor announced a series of important measures to provide support and assistance to Jewish communities and other people in need to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus crisis.

Dr. Kantor expressed his full support to everyone affected on behalf of Europe's Jewish communities and emphasised the importance of unity and solidarity in order to overcome the crisis.

EJC EXPRESSES OUTRAGE AT MASS DISPLAY OF PUBLIC ANTISEMITISM AT AALST CARNIVAL

FEBRUARY 24, 2020

In a private meeting with Pope Francis in the Vatican today, Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the World Holocaust Forum Foundation and the European Jewish Congress, discussed focusing future World Holocaust Forums on the ethical and moral issues of the day, like rising extremism and manifestations of hatred, refugees, education and global inequality.

“We believe strongly in the need to also focus future World Holocaust Forums on addressing the most pressing moral and ethical challenges of our time and to develop best practices which can help shape a better future for all of humanity”, Dr. Kantor said. “These are all complex issues which require deep discussion by world leaders, opinion shapers and representatives from the world of religion, morality and ethics.”

Pope Francis supported the idea for future World Holocaust Forums to be dedicated to moral and ethical challenges, in particular because of the need to protect younger generations from extremist ideology.

Dr. Kantor thanked the Pope for his strong commitment to preserving the memory of the Holocaust, and combatting the contemporary resurgence of antisemitism, and for sending a delegation led by Cardinal Koch to represent the Holy See at the Fifth World Holocaust at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Last month, the Fifth World Holocaust Forum took place in Jerusalem, with the participation of 48 heads of state and world leaders in a unique event titled “Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism,” organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation in cooperation with Yad Vashem, under the auspices of the President of the State of Israel, Reuven Rivlin.

“The Fifth World Holocaust Forum can serve as an important blueprint for how to create international momentum on a particular issue of global importance,” Dr. Kantor continued. “We hope that the unity and the collective experience felt at the Forum will be a source of inspiration for world leaders to take on these issues for the good of all humanity.”

At the meeting, Dr. Kantor bestowed the 2020 Golden Vision award on Pope Francis as a token of appreciation for his message of brotherhood between Jews and Christians that is a living testimony of love and trust in the future of humanity, and his unrelenting commitment to younger generations and promoting solutions to the moral and ethical challenges of our time.

The Golden Vision award is the highest award of the European Jewish Congress that is bestowed annually to two personalities – one Jewish, and one non-Jewish – for their outstanding intellectual contribution to a more inclusive world where antisemitism is not tolerated.

DR. MOSHE KANTOR BESTOWS GOLDEN VISION AWARD ON POPE FRANCIS

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“We believe strongly in the need to also focus future World Holocaust Forums on addressing the most pressing moral and ethical challenges of our time and to develop best practices which can help shape a better future for all of humanity”, Dr. Kantor said. “These are all complex issues which require deep discussion by world leaders, opinion shapers and representatives from the world of religion, morality and ethics.”

Pope Francis supported the idea for future World Holocaust Forums to be dedicated to moral and ethical challenges, in particular because of the need to protect younger generations from extremist ideology.

Dr. Kantor thanked the Pope for his strong commitment to preserving the memory of the Holocaust, and combatting the contemporary resurgence of antisemitism, and for sending a delegation led by Cardinal Koch to represent the Holy See at the Fifth World Holocaust at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Last month, the Fifth World Holocaust Forum took place in Jerusalem, with the participation of 48 heads of state and world leaders in a unique event titled “Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism,” organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation in cooperation with Yad Vashem, under the auspices of the President of the State of Israel, Reuven Rivlin.

“The Fifth World Holocaust Forum can serve as an important blueprint for how to create international momentum on a particular issue of global importance,” Dr. Kantor continued. “We hope that the unity and the collective experience felt at the Forum will be a source of inspiration for world leaders to take on these issues for the good of all humanity.”

At the meeting, Dr. Kantor bestowed the 2020 Golden Vision award on Pope Francis as a token of appreciation for his message of brotherhood between Jews and Christians that is a living testimony of love and trust in the future of humanity, and his unrelenting commitment to younger generations and promoting solutions to the moral and ethical challenges of our time.

The Golden Vision award is the highest award of the European Jewish Congress that is bestowed annually to two personalities – one Jewish, and one non-Jewish – for their outstanding intellectual contribution to a more inclusive world where antisemitism is not tolerated.

DR. MOSHE KANTOR ADDRESSES 48 WORLD LEADERS GATHERED IN JERUSALEM FOR FIFTH WORLD HOLOCAUST FORUM

JANUARY 23, 2020

President of the World Holocaust Forum Foundation and the European Jewish Congress Dr. Moshe Kantor told the almost fifty world leaders assembled for the Fifth World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem that the situation for Jewish communities is extremely precarious.

"According to surveys, more than 80% of Jews say they feel unsafe in Europe today with more than 40% said they have considered leaving the continent," Dr. Kantor said during his address. "In recent years, around 3% of Jews have emigrated from Europe annually because of antisemitism, meaning that in only 30 years, if the current trends persist or worsen, there could be no Jews left in Europe by 2050."

Dr. Kantor was speaking at the Fifth World Holocaust Forum at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, with the participation of almost 50 heads of state and world leaders.

The historic event, titled "Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism," was organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation in cooperation with Yad Vashem, under the auspices of the President of the State of Israel.

"I am delighted that you have gathered here today to stand side by side with the Jewish People," Dr. Kantor told the world leaders. "It sends a powerful message that antisemitism is unacceptable and a danger to all of our societies."

"I thank you for this, because it gives the Jewish People around the world hope, that extremism can be countered with the values of tolerance, decency and moderation."

WORLD LEADERS DESCEND ON ISRAEL FOR WORLD HOLOCAUST FORUM

JANUARY 22, 2020

48 world leaders arrived in Israel to attend the Fifth World Holocaust Forum, marking the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

The event, titled "Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism," is being organised by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, headed by Dr. Moshe Kantor, in cooperation with Yad Vashem, under the auspices of the President of the State of Israel, H.E. Mr. Reuven "Ruvy" Rivlin..

Among the world leaders scheduled to participate in the forum will be Russian President Vladimir Putin, French President Emmanuel Macron, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, U.S. President Donald Trump's senior adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner and a special Democratic Party delegation headed by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. All the leaders of the European Union will attend, as will Britain's Prince Charles and many other heads of state. This is the largest diplomatic delegation ever to visit Israel, except for the funerals of former prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to meet with Pence, Putin, Macron and Pelosi. With the Russian president, Netanyahu will discuss the request to pardon Naama Issachar, the Israeli-American imprisoned in Russia on drug charges. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov arrived in Israel on Monday in advance of the visit, and will meet on Tuesday with Social Equality Minister Gila Gamliel, who has been mediating matters concerning Issachar. On Wednesday afternoon, Putin will inaugurate a memorial to the victims of the siege of Leningrad in Jerusalem's Sacher Park.

About 10 world leaders who will meet with Netanyahu will also meet with Kahol Lavan Chairman Benny Gantz for the sake of balance in an election period. Macron, Prince Charles and most likely Putin will meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Others, including German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, will meet with their counterpart President Reuven Rivlin. Most of the guests will meet with Holocaust survivors from their countries.

The event in Yad Vashem will take place four days before the official event commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The

ceremony will take place at the site of the camp in Poland, as it does every year. Duda will speak at the Polish event, which will be attended by Rivlin and Steinmeier.

Israel hopes for the adoption of the official definition of anti-Semitism formulated by the U.S.-based International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which states that criticism of Zionism or the existence of the State of Israel is considered anti-Semitic. In recent years Israel has worked to promote this definition as well as laws against the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement.

Rivlin, the official host of the event, will hold a reception and dinner for the delegation heads. Speakers will include Rivlin, the King of Spain as a representative of the world leaders and Israel Prize laureate and Holocaust researcher Prof. Yehuda Bauer. David D'Or, Miri Mesika and Amir Benayoun will perform "The Last Survivor," the song written for the 2018 Knesset delegation to the March of the Living, an annual educational gathering in Poland dedicated to the Holocaust.

Jerusalem's mayor, the Foreign Ministry and the Jewish National Fund will hold a special event for the hundreds of journalists arriving with the various delegations.

EJC WELCOMES DECISION BY SWEDISH PM TO ADOPT INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

JANUARY 21, 2020

The European Jewish Congress welcomes the decision by Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to endorse the working definition of antisemitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).

Throughout its tenure, the government of Prime Minister Löfven has always proven receptive to the concerns of the Swedish Jewish community and the latest decision is a fundamental step towards combatting the scourge of antisemitism.

It is particularly meaningful that he chose to make this announcement ahead of the Fifth World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem, and we are grateful for Prime Minister Löfven's strong personal commitment to honouring the memory of the Holocaust.

Following this decision, announced in an op-ed on Yediot Aharonot, Sweden endorses the legally non-binding working definition and the list of examples of antisemitism that serve as illustrations.

The European Jewish Congress deeply values its partnership with Prime Minister Löfven and looks forward to continuing its close cooperation with the Swedish government at the International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism in Malmö in October 2020.

AHEAD OF THE FIFTH WORLD HOLOCAUST FORUM, THE FIRST EVER GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT ANTISEMITISM IS LAUNCHED, TITLED: 'STOP THIS STORY!'

JANUARY 16, 2020

For the first time ever, a social media campaign was launched today with the aim of generating awareness about the problem of antisemitism, ahead of the Fifth World Holocaust Forum, where over 45 heads of state and world leaders will gather in Jerusalem to remember the Holocaust and find ways to fight antisemitism.

The 'Stop This Story!' Campaign, will be the first global initiative of its kind that will leverage Instagram's AR (Augmented Reality) effects to drive a global movement.

Already, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, supermodel Bar Refaeli, actress Vanessa Kirby (from 'The Crown'), former NBA player Omri Casspi, and many other international figures, actors, entertainers, and sportsmen and women, have joined the campaign and created their unique images. Many other international stars have been secured to join.

Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the World Holocaust Forum Foundation and the European Jewish Congress, initiator of the unprecedented international Instagram campaign that calls on the world to act and put an end to the never-ending story of antisemitism, said "Antisemitism, in all its various forms, harms Jews around the world on a daily basis, whether in their homes, streets, schools, universities, synagogues, and online. This phenomenon causes more than 80% of the Jews of Europe to fear for their safety and more than 40% of them to consider leaving their homes and communities."

"The best way to spread any message today is through social media because social networks and those who use them have the power to make the necessary changes in our societies." Kantor added. "Instagram users are a significant demographic segment that is growing rapidly, and I have always argued that the best way to fight any form of prejudice is through education and awareness. Creating awareness of the story of antisemitism is the first step necessary to stopping it."

Instagram's virtual effects, launched a few months ago, have swept millions of users around the world to tell their story in a more creative way, but now, for the first time, they are becoming a tool for social change as part of this digital campaign.

The campaign recruited some of the world's leading AR effects' creators. It has gained the support of international influencers, each of them with millions followers, to create their own creative "Stop This Story!" effect adjusted to the palm of the hand, so anyone can easily and experientially create and share their "Stop This Story!" image on Instagram and join the global movement. (@stopthisstory)

In addition, a time-lapse video project, featuring Dr. Ruth Westheimer, 91, the world-renowned sex therapist, media personality and Holocaust survivor, will be posted on Instagram and other social media platforms in a series of stories. The video highlights the never-ending story of antisemitism, utilizing impressive visual techniques.

Using these technologies, including Time lapse, the endless story of antisemitism, from the 1930s to the year 2020, will show the world that antisemitism did not end with the Holocaust and is gaining steam again to frightening levels.

On 23 January 2020, the Fifth World Holocaust Forum will take place in Jerusalem, and over 45 heads of state have confirmed they will participate in this unique event. The event, titled "Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism," is being organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation in cooperation with Yad Vashem and the President of the State of Israel, Mr. Reuven Rivlin.

The President of France, Emmanuel Macron, President of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of Italy, Sergio Mattarella, President of Austria, Alexander Van der Bellen, President of Russia, Vladimir Putin and H.R.H Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales, are among the leaders who will participate in this historic event.

EJC CONDEMNS ATTACKS BY FINNISH MP AGAINST THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF HELSINKI

JANUARY 16, 2020

The European Jewish Congress stands in solidarity with our affiliate, the Central Council of Jewish Communities of Finland following the appalling remarks by MP Anna Kontula against the Jewish community of Helsinki.

Ms. Kontula, a Member of Parliament for the Left Alliance party was arrested in Israel on Tuesday, 15 January 2020 alongside other members of an activist group after attempting to cut through the border fence between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

After the Jewish community of Helsinki expressed concerns about her malicious intent and double standards against Israel, Kontula absurdly replied that "any group or institution that equates Judaism with Israel is essentially antisemitic", effectively accusing the Finnish Jewish community of antisemitism.

Whilst criticism of the State of Israel, like of any other country is legitimate, applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation is antisemitic. Consequently, we share the concerns of the Jewish community of Finland about the intentions behind MP Kontula's statements and actions.

It is deeply regrettable that MP Kontula opted to break Israeli law and international protocol and we call on the Parliament of Finland to condemn her conduct and to take appropriate disciplinary action.

EJC PRESIDENT SAYS THE RISE IN ANTISEMITIC ATTACKS IN THE U.S. SHOWS IT IS NOW A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

DECEMBER 29, 2019

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor said after the stabbing spree at a Rabbi's home in Monsey, New York, that the wave of antisemitic attacks in the U.S. are eerily familiar.

"The recent spate of attacks on Jews in the U.S. in general, and New York in particular, show that antisemitism is now a global pandemic," Dr. Kantor said. "Unfortunately, we are witnessing how identifiable Jews and Jewish institutions are open targets for antisemites from all backgrounds and ideologies."

"We have learned the hard way in Europe that extremism, whether Left or Right, is connected in its disdain for Jews and one continually feeds off the other. We call on all leaders of the world to take the fight against antisemitism more seriously and clamp down on those who spread hate because eventually it becomes a problem for society as a whole."

EJC PRESIDENT MOSHE KANTOR AT HIGH-LEVEL EUROPEAN EVENT: "CRISIS OF ANTISEMITISM IS A SLIPPERY SLOPE TO GLOBAL CATASTROPHE"

DECEMBER 10, 2019

European Jewish Congress (EJC) President Dr. Moshe Kantor warned that antisemitism should no longer be seen as just a Jewish issue because it poses a wider threat to society as a whole, at the event "After Halle: From words to action against antisemitism" held in Brussels, hosted by the European Parliament Working Group on Antisemitism.

"Antisemitism is a symptom of a much more acute problem," Dr. Kantor said. "When a Jew is assaulted in the street for being Jewish, it is essentially an assault against democratic values, the rule of law and executive power."

"As the political centre weakens and becomes more fragile, extremist groups who promote intolerance try to gain political power by attacking the foundations of democratic societies. To tolerate the crisis of antisemitism is to normalize extremism. The crisis of antisemitism is a slippery slope to global catastrophe.

We need to understand this threat, and we need to deliver this message to the silent majority."

The event was organised by the European Parliament Working Group on Antisemitism (EP-WGAS), in cooperation with the European Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith International. The other keynote speaker, alongside Dr. Kantor, was President of the European Commission Dr. Ursula von der Leyen.

"At this pivotal point in history, world leaders need to stand up and act. Words are not enough. A roadmap needs to be drawn up and an agreement on joint action needs to be finalised. It requires the involvement of the leadership to deal with it on all levels – legislation, education, enforcement and punishment. Like in Halle, violent antisemitism is driven by incitement, lies and myths. There should be zero tolerance for antisemitic hate speech and all other forms of hatred. Harsher punishment should be given to those who spread anti-Jewish hatred in words before it turns into violent action." Dr Kantor added.

At the event, President von der Leyen announced the creation of a new task force to tackle rising antisemitism across Europe, which she said represents "attacks on us all."

"A rising challenge needs a stronger response from our side," she said. "Antisemitism is a poison for our community. We will remain vigilant. And more, we will act on all levels, through security means of course, but also in our education systems and in the public debate. Fostering Jewish life is something I have taken seriously," she added.

The Chair and Vice-Chairs of EP-WGAS, MEP Karoline Edtstadler, MEP Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar and MEP Sergey Lagodinsky joined academic experts for panel discussions. MEP Nicola Beer, Vice President of the European Parliament and Vice-Chair of WGAS gave closing remarks.

"Halle has demonstrated dramatically the urgency need for action," said Ms. Edtstadler, "it must be self-evident that Jewish people can move freely and feel safe in our society, and this must be our common goal in the spirit of European values and traditions."

For their part, MEP Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar insisted on importance of law enforcement and MEP Sergey Lagodinsky raised the issue of addressing antisemitism in education and ensuring that teachers are adequately trained. MEP Nicola Beer insisted that the attack in Halle was an attack on all European society and emphasised the urgent need for joint to stamp out antisemitism.

Dr. Kantor is a strong advocate of a global approach to fighting antisemitism and has initiated an unprecedented event to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

On 23 January 2020, the Fifth World Holocaust Forum will take place in Jerusalem, and almost 40 heads of state have confirmed they will participate in this unique event. The event, titled “Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism,” is being organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, also headed by Dr. Kantor, in cooperation with Yad Vashem, under the auspices of the President of the State of Israel, Mr. Reuven “Ruvi” Rivlin.

The President of France Emmanuel Macron, President of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of Russia Vladimir Putin and President of Italy Sergio Mattarella are among the leaders who have so far confirmed their attendance of this historic event.

EJC PRESIDENT MOSHE KANTOR PRAISES FRENCH PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION ON THE FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

DECEMBER 4, 2019

European Jewish Congress President Dr. Moshe Kantor praised the French National Assembly’s decision, which adopts the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and recognises explicitly that this includes hatred against the State of Israel based on the perception of the latter as a Jewish state.

“We applaud this decision because it is logical and important,” Dr. Kantor said. “Anti-Zionism is almost always just a mask for hatred of Jews and Jewish collectivity and is just the most modern manifestation of the oldest hatred.”

“In the past, antisemites used religious, racial and ethnic slurs, and now they use national. Anti-Zionists co-opt all the worst antisemitic libels and motifs throughout history against Jews and merely reapply them to the Jewish State.”

The motion passed with 154 in favor and 72 opposed in the parliament’s lower house. It was proposed by lawmaker Sylvain Maillard of La Republique en Marche, President Emmanuel Macron’s centrist party.

Francis Kalifat, President of the Crif umbrella organisation of French Jews added: “This vote is above all a step forward for France, which joins the concert of 20 countries that have adopted the IHRA definition. It is a necessary step to strengthen the fight against this scourge that represents more than 50% of racist acts in our country.”

“This is a very important step in the global fight against antisemitism and we hope that this will be a precedent that other nations will adopt,” Dr. Kantor continued. “There should be no hiding place for hate, because anti-Zionism is in most cases just a thin veil for antisemitism and it should be treated and thought of in the same way.”

Dr. Kantor is a leading advocate of a global approach to fighting antisemitism and has initiated and is supporting an unprecedented event to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

On 23 January 2020, the Fifth World Holocaust Forum will take place in Jerusalem, and almost 40 heads of state have confirmed they will participate in this unique event. The event, titled “Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism,” is being organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, also headed by Dr. Kantor, in cooperation with Yad Vashem, under the auspices of the President of the State of Israel, Reuven Rivlin.

The President of France Emmanuel Macron, President of Russia Vladimir Putin, President of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of Italy Sergio Mattarella and President of Austria Alexander Van der Bellen are among the leaders who have so far confirmed their attendance of this historic event.

DOZENS OF WORLD LEADERS CONFIRMED THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE FIFTH WORLD HOLOCAUST FORUM IN JERUSALEM

NOVEMBER 20, 2019

Some 30 heads of state from around the world will attend the Fifth World Holocaust Forum, taking place on 23 January 2020, at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

The lead-up to this historic event was officially launched this morning at a press conference, held at the President's Residence in Jerusalem, where President **Reuven (Ruvi) Rivlin**, Foreign Minister **Israel Katz**, Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev** and World Holocaust Forum Foundation President **Dr. Moshe Kantor** spoke about the importance of the event and the urgent need to fight against antisemitism and Holocaust denial.

The event, titled "Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism," is being organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, in cooperation with Yad Vashem, under the auspices of the President of the State of Israel.

As the world prepares to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the message will be clear that antisemitism has no place in our global society.

The President of Russia **H.E. Mr. Vladimir Putin**, President of France **H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron**, President of Germany **H.E. Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier**, President of Italy **H.E. Mr. Sergio Mattarella**, President of Austria **H.E. Mr. Alexander Van der Bellen**, and Prime Minister of Sweden **H.E. Mr. Stefan Löfven** are among the leaders who have so far confirmed their attendance of this historic event.

The event takes place against the background of the rise in hateful and violent expressions of antisemitism, especially in Europe. Given this alarming situation, efforts to educate about the dangers of antisemitism, racism and xenophobia and foster Holocaust commemoration and research have made this event more crucial and relevant than ever.

President of the State of Israel Reuven Rivlin:

"In a few weeks I will be joined by heads of states and world leaders, who were invited by the European Jewish Congress and Yad Vashem to be with me in Jerusalem, to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The presidents of Russia, Germany, France, Italy and Austria together with a representative of the United Kingdom and many other leaders, will come to Jerusalem to discuss how we can fight anti-Semitism. We will come together to think about how to pass on Holocaust remembrance to generations who will live in a world without survivors, and what steps we must take to ensure the safety and security of Jews- all around the world."

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Israel Katz:

"Holding this high-level event in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, as we mark seventy-five years since the liberation of Auschwitz, has great historical and personal significance. I am the son of Holocaust survivors Meir and Malka Katz, may they rest in peace. My mother Malka Katz was in Auschwitz and was sent on the 'Death March'. Since those dark days, we have defended, and developed our homeland. Today, the State of Israel is strong and advanced. The IDF ensures that the Jewish People will never again stand defenseless against its enemies. Even so, antisemitism is rising around the world. We see it in violent attacks against Jews, vandalized cemeteries, incitement, and the murder of Jews. The international community must unite against the rise of antisemitism."

World Holocaust Forum Foundation Founder and President Dr. Moshe Kantor:

"The pledge 'to remember and never forget' should be a pledge for all of humanity, and not just for the Jewish people," said Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the World Holocaust Forum. "Jewish life is once again under threat in Europe. It is under threat from the day-to-day harassment and attacks, on the streets, in schools, at universities, online, and even in their own homes. It has become so bad that the overwhelming majority of Jews in Europe no longer feel safe."

"Antisemitism is a hatred that knows no boundaries, and has been adopted by multiple ideologies. Jews are relentlessly attacked by the Left, the Right, and the mainstream. This is another pivotal point in history where the leaders of the world have to stand up and act. Words are not enough, and I conceived the World Holocaust Forum to be a place where we can create an action plan to aggressively fight back against antisemitism."

Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev:

“The Holocaust has become a paradigm to measure the human capacity to engage in radical, cruel and systematic evil, not only because of its unprecedented scope – the murder of six million Jewish men, women and children – but also because of the ‘rationale’ behind Nazi ideology – the extermination of the Jewish people as a way to protect their own national interests and that of the “pure German race.” The ability of an advanced society to justify the eradication of an entire people and culture was supported and even encouraged by age-old antisemitic tropes, some of which are present in our post-Holocaust global society.

“Yad Vashem works tirelessly to increase the knowledge and awareness of the history of the Holocaust, not only to ensure that its memory continues to be relevant 75 years after the end of WWII, but also as a tool to fight antisemitism, racism and xenophobia, alarming phenomena that are on the rise around the world today.”

About the World Holocaust Forum Foundation

Founded in 2005 by Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress, the World Holocaust Forum Foundation is an international organization dedicated to preserving the memory of the Holocaust and its important lessons for all of humanity, including fighting rising antisemitism. Past World Holocaust Forum events have taken place at Auschwitz, Babi Yar and Terezin, in cooperation with Yad Vashem, with the highest-level political and diplomatic representation.

We must never forget the lessons of Auschwitz

Seventy-five years after the camp was liberated, we urgently need to stop the new rise of extremism

MOSHE KANTOR



In the early Sixties, John F Kennedy paraphrased John Stuart Mill, observing that "the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing". At that time, the Holocaust remained fresh in the memory and the incalculable cost of Thirties inaction in the face of creeping extremism was still being counted through the testimony of those who survived. In the decades that followed, successive generations were schooled in the consequences of underestimating extremist views.

Today marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and it is probably the last commemoration where Holocaust survivors will be in attendance. The memory of one of humanity's most horrific events fades with the passing of those who endured it. At the same time, anti-Semitism and the proliferation of extremist views are re-emergent. The controversy surrounding the British Labour Party and its apparent lack of urgency in rebutting sustained and credible charges of anti-Semitism has been a consistent feature of the past few years. In a recent poll, more than 80 per cent of European Jews admitted to feeling unsafe. A new strain of latent anti-Semitic, anti-Zionist opinion is being allowed to germinate. Views that would recently have been regarded as abhorrent are greeted in too many quarters with a resigned shrug.

The rise of digital communication has complicated the danger. Social media has a chilling ability to connect the disaffected with extremist views that offer a focus for their anger. The post-truth era, a widening gulf between rich and poor and the asymmetric threat of online disinformation offers fertile soil for those preaching hate and assigning blame to the Jewish community or other similarly maligned groups. The middle classes, often the rational opponents of extremist tendencies, have been distracted by their own economic struggles, eroding their ability or willingness to act as an effective force for social stability. But now, more than any time in the past 75 years, there is a fierce urgency to rearticulate the lessons of the past.

The weapons we have at our disposal are threefold. First, we must continue to educate people of every colour and creed on the consequences of standing idly by while erroneous slurs are manufactured and develop into frightening prejudice. We must work particularly hard to relate these lessons to those generations who have never known war, much less the need to actively oppose extremist tyranny. Secondly, we need laws that empower communities to meet ever more complex extremist methodologies head on. The asymmetry and cowardice of modern hate campaigns, particularly in cyberspace, require a more sophisticated legal framework. Thirdly, we must invest our security and law enforcement communities with the powers and tools they need to identify and neutralise anti-Semitic and extremist hate campaigns well before they establish any momentum. Anti-Semitism fundamentally equates to extremism and extremism is a threat to us all. When we allow these forces to shake the pillars of our communities, society as a whole is imperilled. We would do well to remember that while the Holocaust claimed six million Jewish lives, close to 50 million non-Jews died in a war inspired by a political movement that adopted the extermination of global Jewry as a founding principle. Any resigned acceptance of extreme prejudice will fuel other hateful philosophies emboldened by the absence of serious resistance. The relative peace we have enjoyed for the past 75 years has lulled us into a false sense of security. Generations given no choice but to fight for their freedom and beliefs are dying, and the world is now largely governed by those who have never experienced the price of tolerating false ideology. As we embark on a new decade, nationalism is in the ascendant and global institutions borne out of the post-war consensus face challenges. Last week, we convened 46 world leaders at the World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem, to renew a joint commitment to the rejection of anti-Semitism. It can be done if we all recognise that we can never drop our guard. Put simply, it requires good men and good women to act.

Dr Moshe Kantor is president of the European Jewish Congress

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Opinion

A nuclear Iran means a regional hegemon and a global threat

Opinion: The Islamic Republic's aggressive actions over the past five years and its efforts to destabilize the region are clear and it would use its position as a nuclear power to enforce its will, threatening the world's peace and stability.

Moshe Kantor | Published: 08.08.20, 14:00

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The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed the year ago, otherwise known as the Iran nuclear deal, was considered a triumph of global diplomacy and the first step towards a more peaceful and stable world order. However, in the years since, the reality on the ground has been anything but that.

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On the 10th anniversary of the nuclear deal, the European Union, one of its major signatories and supporters, has to ask itself whether this agreement has brought us closer to peace and non-aggression or further away.

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Jewish World

Five Jews who made a splash in Israel in 5780

From changing the face of the Middle East to building a world-class cycling team, redefining our social media to recruiting world leaders in the fight against anti-Semitism - these five men have made an undeniable impact on Israeli life over the past 12 months.

Elia Averbach | Published: 09.12.20, 10:07

Listen to this article now

Jared Kushner
Year of birth: 1981
Spouse: Ivanka Trump, with three children
Country of birth: U.S.A.
Country of residence: U.S.A.

Interesting fact: Kushner did not live the way the American media covered his family - as he bought a newspaper for \$10 million.

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The interconnectedness of Jewish and Portuguese people

ALL ISRAELI THINGS

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In 2016, when President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, visited the Lisbon Synagogue, he spoke about how Portugal must cherish its unique relations with the Jewish people and how these ties have helped shape modern Portuguese national identity.

"It is never too much to express a word of gratitude to this inheritance, which enriched us in the past and which played an important role in shaping our identity," said President Rebelo de Sousa.

White supremacists, fascists, neo-fascists and neo-Nazi extremists are active in the

Oswald Mosley's grandson joins reunion of 43 Group survivors

JOHN HADFIELD

Aristocrat who called GAA chief 'Jewish' event failed

JOHN LAURIE

Jewish activists released from event with ambassador after singing protest

ANNEKE KAMMERLING

Pasha's 'Singer' Ben with Israel's Ben-Zion's Ben-Zion

ANNEKE KAMMERLING

Florida school shooting suspect

ANNEKE KAMMERLING



T ALEXIS LACROIX

ENTRETIEN EXCLUSIF

Moshe Kantor « L'identité juive est une part substantielle de l'identité européenne »

Depuis des décennies, il veille à préserver la vie juive en diaspora, à protéger le judaïsme européen et à renforcer sa position sur la scène internationale. À 67 ans, le Dr Moshe Kantor, réélu président du Congrès Juif Européen en octobre 2020, est l'un des leaders les plus actifs du monde juif contemporain. Fondateur du Forum mondial de l'Holocauste, à l'origine du plus grand événement diplomatique de l'histoire de l'État d'Israël, en janvier 2020, à Yad Vashem, à l'occasion du 75^e anniversaire de la libération d'Auschwitz, Moshe Kantor est aussi le président du Forum international du Luxembourg sur la prévention des catastrophes nucléaires et le fondateur du Conseil européen pour la tolérance et la réconciliation, une ONG composée d'anciens chefs d'État européens et de lauréats du prix Nobel de la paix visant à promouvoir l'entente entre les peuples. Fils d'un soldat juif de l'armée rouge d'Ukraine, qui a perdu de nombreux membres de sa famille pendant la Shoah, ce philanthrope, homme d'affaires et grand collectionneur d'art, croit en la promesse de l'Europe et s'attache à promouvoir l'héritage historique et plurilingue des populations juives sur le Vieux continent. À travers le Fonds juif européen, qu'il a créé en 2006, Moshe Kantor œuvre pour la promotion de la vie juive en Europe et soutient des programmes éducatifs et de leadership pour renforcer l'identité, la culture et la tradition juives. Fer de lance de la lutte contre l'antisémitisme, il a également fondé le « Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry » à l'université de Tel Aviv qui édit, chaque année, un rapport annuel sur l'antisémitisme dans le monde. C'est au lendemain de la publication du rapport 2020, en avril dernier, qu'il a répondu aux questions d'Actualité Juive, en exclusivité. ■



Le centre Kantor de l'université de Tel Aviv vient de publier son rapport annuel sur l'antisémitisme dans le monde en 2020. Celui-ci révèle une baisse des attaques antisémites contre des personnes, mais une hausse significative des théories complottistes associant les Juifs à la propagation du virus. Comment analysez-vous ces résultats ?

Moshe Kantor : L'année 2020 a été une année inédite à plus d'un titre. Toutefois, je souhaiterais mettre l'accent sur le desordre social et la profonde polarisation dont nous avons été témoins au niveau mondial. La pandémie a notamment été un terreau fertile pour que l'antisémitisme, le racisme et l'extrémisme prospèrent. Le rapport du centre Kantor de l'université de Tel Aviv relatif à la situation de l'antisémitisme dans le monde a effectivement fait ressortir une

diminution d'attaques physiques en 2020. Celle-ci s'explique aisément par la série de confinements et les sévères restrictions mises en place un peu partout en Europe. Les gens sont pour la plupart restés chez eux. J'aimerais vous donner quelques chiffres à cet égard. Le nombre d'incidents antisémites violents a diminué de 18,6%, passant de 456 en 2019 à 371 en 2020. En outre, le nombre de blessures physiques a diminué de 37,1%, passant de 170 en 2019 à 107 en 2020, et les dommages aux biens privés ont également été réduits de 35,4%. Toutefois, comme en tout temps de crise, la haine anti-juive a proliféré, mais cette fois-ci en ligne. On a pu observer une prolifération des théories conspirationnistes affirmant que les Juifs, le peuple juif ou l'État d'Israël seraient derrière la pandémie, ou en profiteraient.

Justement, votre étude rapporte que la cyber-haine s'est moins répandue sur les réseaux sociaux les plus populaires en raison d'une plus grande vigilance et des mesures prises par les géants



• By MOSHE KANTOR

Now that a ceasefire has been reached between Israel and Hamas, and the temperature, we hope, is lowered around the world, it is important to learn the lessons of the last few weeks.

Over this period, the Jews in Europe and elsewhere have been under assault, online, in the media and on the streets. From convoys of cars with people waving Palestinian flags, traveling across the UK specifically to target Jewish areas, shouting "Fuck the Jews, rape their daughters," to the mobsters in Brussels and Vienna calling to massacre the Jews, to the 200 people who marched in the city of Gelsenkirchen in western Germany, toward a local synagogue shouting "Fucking Jews."

Jews have been hunted and attacked in restaurants, rabbis have been beaten in broad daylight, and Jewish institutions have been desecrated in the UK, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Holland, Canada, the US and elsewhere.

Online, the situation was no better. According to the ADL, "Hate was right" was posted more than 12,000 times in just one week span in May.

Statistics in the UK indicate that there was a 50% rise in antisemitic incidents during the conflict, which might well be even higher due to under-reporting.

Jews have been faced into the shadows, removing all signs of Judaism in public and staying away from Jewish institutions and areas.

While the constraints forced us to stay home due to the risk of infection, the spread of the antisemitism virus has brought on what some are calling the "Jewish lockdown," with Jews



PRO-PALESTINIAN DEMONSTRATORS attend a protest following a flare-up of Israeli-Palestinian violence, in London last month. (Haydn White/Reuters)

at home to leave their homes. That we have reached this situation should be a stain on our societies. We are reaching breaking point for trust between Jewish citizens and the authorities whose role it is to ensure our safety and security.

It is, therefore, vital that decision makers and opinion-shapers take measures to ensure there are no repeat of these incidents and that Jews feel safe in the streets of Europe.

First is the simple acknowledgment that attacks on Jews and Jewish targets are always motivated by antisemitism, no matter the attempt to connect, isolate them with geopolitical events 3,000 miles away.

It should be obvious, because no other citizens are attacked because of their religion, ethnic or national affiliation with any country of the world. There are currently dozens of armed conflicts around the world with tens of thousands of casualties every year, yet not one of these conflicts is imported to Europe to sow the seeds of Palestinian conflict.

This is an important point that needs serious evaluation and understanding.

Second is what our politicians and celebrities have in lowering the flames, not just in the context of the conflict itself, but also in the regions where they live.

Classical antisemitic motifs about Israel's actions - springing from the Holocaust and the death of children, or the fact that they hold some hidden power - are being used as dog whistles to sow hatred toward Jews whenever they are, whatever their views.

POLITICIANS, ACTORS, musicians and sports stars have used social media to intentionally accuse Israel of all manner of crimes, using provocative language that would not be used if used against any other nation or community.

It is often difficult to accuse their role when writing about Israel when compared to their comments about any other issue, if they even notice or react to other issues.

Journalists and the media also have a role to play. A CNN commentator, Ariel Haja, wrote: "The world today needs a Hitler." Thankfully, she was fired after that tweet. While calling and celebrating genocide of the Jewish people, Haja tried to explain that her comment was merely a pro-Palestinian statement.

Her tag was still employed as a commentator even though he had repeatedly praised Hitler, tweeting his support for Germany in a football match as far back as 2014 because of "what Hitler did with Jews."

Especially in recent years when even hint at racism or discrimination often led to dismissal and censure, people can say virtually anything about Jews or Israeli things that would bring freethinkers or critics if directed toward any other people or community.

This double standard must end. Marches and demonstrations should be allowed in every democracy, and even uprisable states should not be considered. However, when a march descends into a riot directed at Jewish people, or marches display hatred of Jews - as happened at the march in London, where a massive inflatable man

with a hooked nose and horns was prominently displayed - it should be stopped immediately and the responsible party or organization should be held responsible and face legal consequences.

Finally, and arguably most importantly, authorities and law enforcement officials must take a zero-tolerance approach to incitement, whether online or off. The number of outright antisemitic posts online have increased exponentially in the last few weeks. Many of these posts are targeted at Jews, often using religion or biology as a pretext to incite violence and bloodshed.

Police and law enforcement in Europe and elsewhere need to be sufficiently equipped to identify and prosecute those who commit antisemitic incidents and not dismiss them as "political commentary."

Antisemitism has a long and dark history of incitement to hatred and dehumanization of Jews. There is no excuse for it, regardless of what is happening elsewhere in the world. It is hypocritical and dangerous to claim that targeting Jews helps the Palestinians.

Our decision makers and opinion-shapers should be asking themselves difficult questions about what they can do to ensure that Jews across Europe will be able to walk the streets safely, and use the Internet without suffering, abuse or threats of violence.

This is the challenge for every one of us. The writer is president of the European Jewish Congress, the umbrella organization of European Jews, representing some 2.5 million Jews in 42 national communities.





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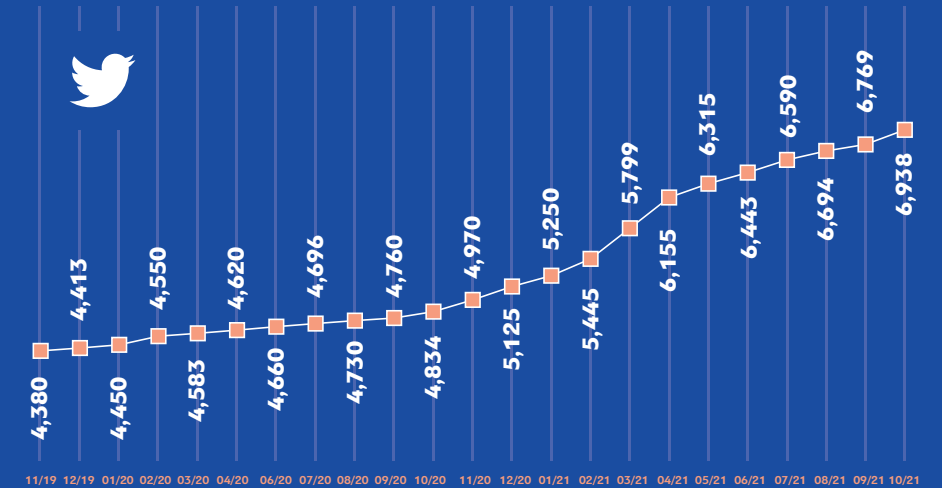
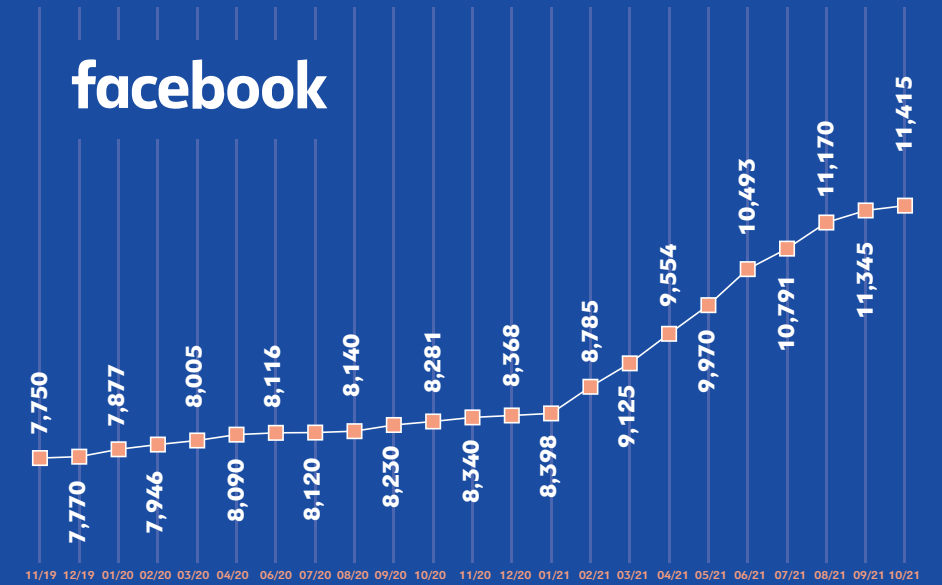
SOCIAL MEDIA

EJC VIDEOS

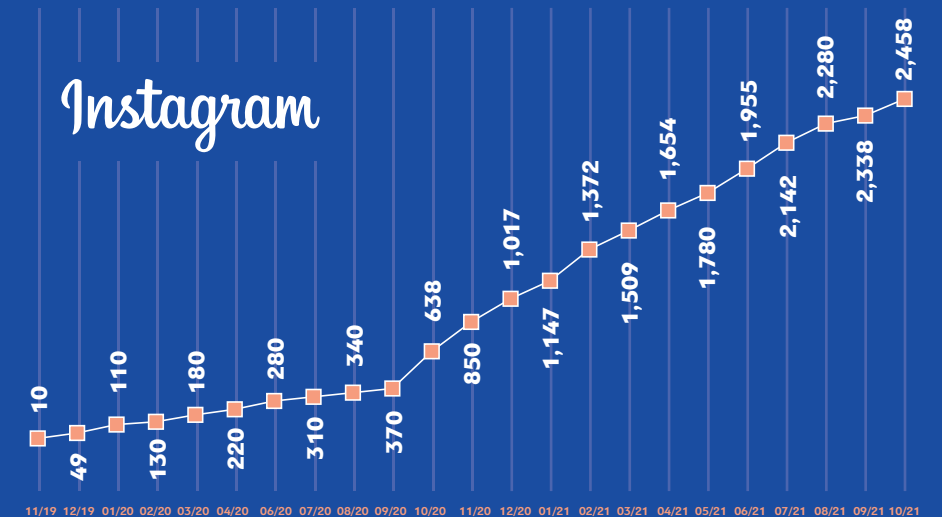
In order to engage with a younger audience and expand our reach, we have started creating short-form videos for our social media channels. These videos range from commemorating the Holocaust, and honouring Righteous Among the Nations to celebrating Jewish life in Europe and beyond.



facebook



Instagram



#EJCOMMUNITIES

In 2019 the European Jewish Congress created its Instagram account @eurojewcong. Already present on Facebook and Twitter, the EJC sought to bring its work and message, as well as stories from Jewish communities across the European continent, to a broader audience, with a particular aim to reach out to younger generations.

Through its presence on Instagram the EJC supports its mission of fighting antisem-



itism, preserving the memory of the Shoah, promoting European Jewish life and strengthening relations between European Jewry and the State of Israel.

In order to promote the rich history and the immense current work of the 42 affiliated national Jewish communities, the EJC launched the #EJCommunities campaign in June 2020.

Each post presents a national Jewish community, highlighting its unique past, distinct culture and achievements. So far more than 35 communities have been featured in the campaign that will run until the end of 2021.

