



STATEMENT ON ANTI-SEMITISM BY MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS

We, the undersigned Mayors and municipal leaders, recognize that we live in a global era. Our cities and towns, regardless of size, belong to a global community in which our citizens are more interconnected than ever and where events in one community can have ramifications across the world.

We also understand that mayors and municipal leaders have a significant role to play in promoting respectful communities that advance coexistence among peoples of all races, ethnicities and faiths, and that the success of any city or town is based upon people of all backgrounds coming together to move our civic communities forward.

It is with this in mind that we express our deep concern about the alarming spread of anti-Semitism around the world, most violently and visibly in parts of Europe, and from which the United States is not immune.

Anti-Semitism is not only an attack on Jews but an assault on the core values of any democratic and pluralistic society. In a world of global communications where anti-Semitic ideas can and do spread rapidly, the impact of the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe does not stop at Europe's borders. When the fundamental values of democracy are challenged, a concerted and principled response is required.

We are, therefore, heartened that leaders from around the world have spoken out about this dangerous phenomenon and have urged action to confront it. Examples of such statements include:

- President Obama, speaking at a Washington, D.C., synagogue, warned: “[I]n recent years, we’ve seen a deeply disturbing rise in anti-Semitism in parts of the world where it would have seemed unthinkable just a few years or decades ago. This is not some passing fad; these aren’t just isolated phenomena. And we know from our history they cannot be ignored.... [W]hen we allow anti-Semitism to take root, then our souls are destroyed, and it will spread;”
- German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared: “Anyone who hits someone wearing a skullcap is hitting us all. Anyone who damages a Jewish gravestone is disgracing our culture. Anyone who attacks a synagogue is attacking the foundations of our free society;”
- French Prime Minister Manuel Valls outlined just how critical the fight against anti-Semitism is, declaring: “The choice was made by the French Revolution in 1789 to recognize Jews as full citizens. If 100,000 Jews leave, France will no longer be France. The French Republic will be judged a failure;” and
- The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reaffirmed, this past November, the crucial need for participating states to continue to combat anti-Semitism.



As Mayors and municipal leaders, we have a special responsibility to speak out against the growing menace of anti-Semitism, and we call upon our European counterparts to join us in adding their names to this statement and in affirming the following:

We, the undersigned,

- Condemn anti-Jewish hatred, in all its forms;
- Reject the notion that anti-Semitic acts, while sometimes carried out in the name of a political cause, may ever be justified or excused by one's opinions about the actions or existence of the State of Israel;
- Declare that prejudices against Jews or others due to differences in religious faith are inconsistent with our core values;
- Support government efforts directed at eradicating anti-Semitism and preventing extremist indoctrination and recruitment; and support expanded education programs, including Holocaust programs, that increase awareness and counter intolerance and discrimination;
- Recognize the ever-present need to be vigilant about efforts to prevent and report acts of anti-Semitism, and other hate crimes; and
- Believe that communities that promote a climate of mutual understanding and respect among all citizens are essential to good governance and democratic life.

We, therefore, commit to working within and across our communities to advance the values of respectful co-existence and call upon mayors, municipal leaders, and other officials in Europe to join us in affirming that anti-Semitism is incompatible with fundamental democratic values.

Respectfully,

SIGNATURE

NAME & TITLE (PRINTED)

CITY/TOWN & STATE

