



International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Statement regarding the decision of the UK Government to formally adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism

**Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance,
Ambassador Mihnea Constantinescu
12 December 2016**

As Chair of the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](#) (IHRA) I welcome the decision of the UK Government to formally adopt the [working definition of antisemitism](#), adopted by the IHRA's 31 Member Countries on 26 May 2016 during our [plenary session in Bucharest](#), Romania.

Working on the principle of consensus, the IHRA adopted the non-legally binding working definition on antisemitism as a sign of the great political commitment among IHRA [Member Countries](#) to combat antisemitism. With this working definition, the organization aimed to set an example of responsible conduct for other international fora and for national governments, hoping to inspire them to adopt a legally-binding working definition themselves.

It is important to understand that the momentum for adopting this working definition came from the experts within the IHRA. Recognizing that we must clearly define an issue before we can best combat it, IHRA experts made an almost unanimous direct recommendation for adoption to the IHRA's political level. The unique structure within the IHRA promotes expert-informed policy making.

The IHRA considers it the obligation of all governments to actively combat antisemitism in all its forms. IHRA's founding document, the [Stockholm Declaration of the year 2000](#), clearly states "With humanity still scarred by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, antisemitism and xenophobia, the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils. Together we must uphold the terrible truth of the Holocaust against those who deny it."

The IHRA's unique network of political representatives and experts in the field of Holocaust education, research and remembrance from 31 Member Countries will continue to call attention to both remembrance of the past, and our duty to the present, encouraging the international community to create the necessary tools to identify the roots of hate, discrimination and exclusion that led to the tragedy of the Holocaust and to work to eradicate them.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance unites governments and experts to shape and advance Holocaust education, remembrance and research world-wide, to speak out on Holocaust related issues including antisemitism, and to uphold the commitments of the 2000 Stockholm Declaration

Adoption of a Working Definition of Antisemitism

Fact Sheet

31 May 2016

On 26 May 2016 in Bucharest, the Plenary of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted a non-legally binding [working definition of antisemitism](#) under the Romanian Chairmanship.

1. The IHRA Plenary consists of 31 [Member Countries](#)- 24 of which are EU member countries.
2. The IHRA is the only intergovernmental organization mandated to focus solely on Holocaust-related issues and has the responsibility to deal with the issue of antisemitism as it is directly embedded in the organization's founding document, the [Stockholm Declaration](#).
3. The IHRA is the first intergovernmental body to adopt this working definition.
4. The recommendation that the IHRA adopt the working definition came from the experts of IHRA's [Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial](#).
5. The [working definition of antisemitism](#) aims to guide the IHRA in its work and to illustrate how antisemitism could manifest itself.
6. The adopted working definition of antisemitism is based on a definition first published by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in 2005, now the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA).
7. Prior to the IHRA adoption, the working definition of antisemitism was already being referred to in some form by a number of bodies (for example, the [European Parliament Working Group on Antisemitism](#), the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism call for adoption in their [London](#) and [Ottawa](#) protocols, the U.S Department of State in its [antisemitism report](#), and the [UK's College of Policing](#).)
8. NGOs which deal with monitoring and reporting on antisemitism have been calling for the adoption of the working definition since 2005, for example in the outcome of the IN@CH/ISCA conference on online antisemitism in April 2016.
9. Together with the IHRA [Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion](#), adopted in 2013, the working definition of antisemitism provides another tool to allow countries and organizations to identify and thereby combat antisemitism.
10. Initiatives undertaken by other international bodies demonstrate the widespread acknowledgment of the problem of antisemitism: in 2004 the OSCE issued the Berlin Declaration and appointed a Personal Representative on Combatting Antisemitism; in December 2015 the European Commission appointed the first [Coordinator on Combatting Antisemitism](#); the OSCE/ODIHR and the European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) held a seminar on combatting antisemitism in Brussels in

June 2016; the German Chair-in-Office of the OSCE had encouraged the endorsement of the working definition of antisemitism at the 23rd OSCE Ministerial Council in Hamburg on 8/9 December 2016.

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Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust

We, High Representatives of Governments at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, declare that:

- 1. The Holocaust (Shoah) fundamentally** challenged the foundations of civilization. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning. After half a century, it remains an event close enough in time that survivors can still bear witness to the horrors that engulfed the Jewish people. The terrible suffering of the many millions of other victims of the Nazis has left an indelible scar across Europe as well.
- 2. The magnitude of the Holocaust,** planned and carried out by the Nazis, must be forever seared in our collective memory. The selfless sacrifices of those who defied the Nazis, and sometimes gave their own lives to protect or rescue the Holocaust's victims, must also be inscribed in our hearts. The depths of that horror, and the heights of their heroism, can be touchstones in our understanding of the human capacity for evil and for good.
- 3. With humanity still scarred** by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, antisemitism and xenophobia, the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils. Together we must uphold the terrible truth of the Holocaust against those who deny it. We must strengthen the moral commitment of our peoples, and the political commitment of our governments, to ensure that future generations can understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences.
- 4. We pledge to strengthen** our efforts to promote education, remembrance and research about the Holocaust, both in those of our countries that have already done much and those that choose to join this effort.
- 5. We share a commitment** to encourage the study of the Holocaust in all its dimensions. We will promote education about the Holocaust in our schools and universities, in our communities and encourage it in other institutions.
- 6. We share a commitment** to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to honour those who stood against it. We will encourage appropriate forms of Holocaust remembrance, including an annual Day of Holocaust Remembrance, in our countries.
- 7. We share a commitment** to throw light on the still obscured shadows of the Holocaust. We will take all necessary steps to facilitate the opening of archives in order to ensure that all documents bearing on the Holocaust are available to researchers.
- 8. It is appropriate** that this, the first major international conference of the new millennium, declares its commitment to plant the seeds of a better future amidst the soil of a bitter past. We empathize with the victims' suffering and draw inspiration from their struggle. Our commitment must be to remember the victims who perished, respect the survivors still with us, and reaffirm humanity's common aspiration for mutual understanding and justice.

About the IHRA

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) unites governments and experts to shape and advance Holocaust education, remembrance and research world-wide, to speak out on Holocaust related issues including antisemitism, and to uphold the commitments of the 2000 Stockholm Declaration.

The IHRA (formerly the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, or ITF) was initiated in 1998 by former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson. Persson decided to establish an international organization that would expand Holocaust education worldwide, and asked then President Bill Clinton and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair to join him in this effort. Persson also developed the idea of an international forum of governments interested in discussing Holocaust education, which took place in Stockholm between 27-29 January 2000. The Forum was attended by the representatives of 46 governments including; 23 Heads of State or Prime Ministers and 14 Deputy Prime Ministers or Ministers. The Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust was the outcome of the Forum's deliberations and is the foundation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

The IHRA currently has 31 member countries, eleven observer countries and seven Permanent International Partners. Members must be committed to the Stockholm Declaration and to the implementation of national policies and programs in support of Holocaust education, remembrance, and research. The national government of each

member country appoints and sends a delegation to IHRA meetings that is composed of both government representatives and national experts, providing a unique link between the two levels.

In addition to the Academic, Education, Memorials and Museums, and Communication Working Groups, specialized committees have been established to address antisemitism and Holocaust denial, the genocide of the Roma, and comparative approaches to genocide studies. The IHRA is also in the process of implementing a Multi-Year Work Plan that focuses on killing sites, access to archives, educational research, and Holocaust Memorial Days.

One of IHRA's key roles is to contribute to the funding of relevant projects through its grant strategy. The purpose of the Grant Programme is to foster international dialogue and the exchange of expertise, increase government involvement in program creation, and target projects with strong multilateral elements in order to create sustainable structures for Holocaust education, remembrance, and research.

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