

**Statement of the Anti-Defamation League
OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Working Session 2: Tolerance and Non-Discrimination
September 24, 2013 - Warsaw**

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) was established 100 years ago with a dual mission – 1) to combat discrimination against Jews and the growth of anti-Jewish movements and 2) to fight all forms of hate and to secure justice and fair treatment for all. For a century, as part of the fight against anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry, ADL has been at the forefront of the campaign to secure historic civil rights achievements, pioneered the development of model hate crimes laws, and developed anti-bias education models to address all forms of prejudice and to prepare each succeeding generation to live in an increasingly diverse society.

We have learned: where anti-Semitism flourishes, no minority group is safe. And, in advancing the fight against anti-Semitism, we can elevate the duty of governments to comply with broader human rights commitments and norms. That is the core of ADL's mission: to secure justice and fair treatment for Jews in tandem with safeguarding the rights of all groups and all people.

Today, anti-Semitism manifests itself in two primary areas: an atmosphere of intimidation fueled by a hostile public discourse and incidents of vandalism, and hate violence. Some examples from just earlier this year include:

- Right here, in Warsaw, the phrase "Jews out" was found written on the stairs of a monument commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (June).
- In Verona, swastikas, the Star of David, and the word "Juden" were spray-painted on the facade of a synagogue (June).
- This summer, Jewish sites in France, Lithuania, Russia, and Spain were desecrated.
- A German rabbi was attacked by a group of youths in a shopping mall (June).
- In France, three men accosted a Jewish Kippah-wearing teenager on the subway, and threatened to do to him "what Mohammed Merah did." They added that Merah "was right to do what he did... We will kill all of you Jews — one day we will kill a Jew." Mohammed Merah is a reference to the 23-year-old who last year killed four Jews at a school in Toulouse (March).

In several participating States, anti-Semitism is espoused by political parties as part of their rhetoric and policy platforms. These parties play on public fear and hatred of other groups, such as Roma and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) communities.

And everyday harassment prevents Jews in certain places from being able to express who they are, to freely wear yarmulkes, Stars of David, or even T-shirts bearing Hebrew lettering. Rabbis, parents, and students live with the knowledge that walking the streets bearing an identifiable Jewish symbol could risk intimidation, harassment, or even violence. This is the unwritten rule too many Jews are forced to live by in the OSCE region.

The French Jewish community security agency (SPCJ) reported an alarming increase in both the number of anti-Semitic incidents and violence in 2012. The SPCJ recorded 614 anti-Semitic acts

in 2012, compared to 389 in 2011, a 58% increase. Physical and verbal attacks rose by 82%, from 171 in 2011 to 315 in 2012. Of those physical attacks, 25% involved a weapon.

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights surveyed Jewish communities in nine countries in 2012 to assess the communities' sentiments. While the results will only be published later this year, preliminary findings from three countries found that 40-50% of respondents have considered emigrating from their country out of concern for their safety.

Anti-Semitism has a seat at the political table in new and significant ways in Hungary, Greece, and Ukraine.

Hungary saw continued racist commentary by the Jobbik Party, an openly anti-Semitic political party with seats in parliament. On the floor of the parliament over the last year, Jobbik leaders have called for compiling a list of Jews in the Hungarian parliament and government, referring to them as national security risks, and have invoked a famous Hungarian blood libel. The notorious anti-Semitic forgery, The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, can even be found on the Jobbik website.

Last year in Greece, the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party was elected for the first time to the Greek Parliament. Its leaders openly espouse anti-Semitism and have denied the Holocaust and, yet, they continue to rise in popularity and gain seats in Parliament. The party regularly publishes blatantly anti-Semitic articles, and one of its parliamentarians read from The Protocols of the Elders of Zion during a parliamentary debate.

In Ukraine, the anti-Semitic Svoboda party was elected to parliament last October with a political platform that promotes ethnic Ukrainian nationalism, excluding Ukrainian Jews. Svoboda's platform proposes that candidates for elected office be required to publicize their ethnicity and that the ethnic makeup of parliament should reflect the proportion of citizens of those ethnic groups in Ukraine. Svoboda has organized demonstrations against Jewish pilgrimages to Hassidic Jewish holy sites in Ukraine, and tried to prevent Holocaust education films from being shown in schools in Lviv.

Traditional forms of anti-Semitism, such as conspiracy theories, use of the discredited myth of "blood libel," and cartoons demonizing Jews, continue to flourish. In May, a cartoon of a bloodied, mutilated baby, appeared in a Norwegian newspaper, which grossly demonized the Jewish ritual of circumcision.

Two of the most fundamental Jewish rites -- circumcision and kosher slaughter -- are increasingly being challenged in Europe.

Brit milah, the ritual circumcision of newborn male children, is a core religious rite of Judaism, practiced by Jews around the world and for thousands of years. Government restrictions on the age of the child or on *mohelim*, Jewish ritual circumcisors, and government requirements for a declaration of adherence to Judaism as a condition for a legal *brit milah*, are intolerable burdens on the free exercise of religion by Jews. When a 2012 German court ruling called into question

the legality of ritual circumcision, the German government and parliament responded with appropriate legislation to safeguard this rite.

Proposals have also emerged in several States to ban the slaughter of unstunned animals. Government requirements that all animals be stunned before slaughter would constitute a *de facto* ban on *shechita*, or kosher slaughter. Pre-slaughter stunning renders the animal unfit to use for kosher meat. Recently, the Netherlands has achieved a positive resolution to these challenges.

On May 20, 2013, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry released the State Department's annual International Religious Freedom Report, which noted a "continued global increase in anti-Semitism," manifested in Holocaust denial, glorification, and relativism; conflating opposition to certain policies of Israel with blatant anti-Semitism; growing nationalistic movements and political parties that target "the other;" and traditional forms of anti-Semitism, such as conspiracy theories, acts of desecration and assault, "blood libel," and cartoons demonizing Jews. The report clearly stated: "When political leaders condoned anti-Semitism, it set the tone for its persistence and growth in countries around the world."

The theme of ADL's Centennial year is "Imagine A World Without Hate," a dream that may seem out of reach. But surely we have it in our power to imagine an OSCE community where the number of countries taking action against hate is growing. Each of your governments has pledged to fight against anti-Semitism, bigotry and hate crime. Each year, ADL joins with Human Rights First to examine the data most of your governments put forward about your efforts to fight anti-Semitism and hate crime and we publish a [report](#) what the data tells us about where your government stands on the spectrum of compliance with OSCE commitments. Last year, we actually found the number of governments simply providing information to ODIHR to be declining. In November, when ODIHR releases the 2012 data, we will again examine it and we hope we will be able to report more governments fulfilling their pledge.

Here are the Anti-Defamation League's recommendations for governments to begin the process to combat anti-Semitism and hate or to build on steps already taken to institutionalize a systemic, comprehensive strategy:

1. Start by using your own bully pulpit to speak out. Political leaders have the most immediate and significant opportunity to set the tone of a national response to an anti-Semitic incident, an anti-Semitic party, or an anti-Semitic parliamentarian. I welcome the statements made in this room by participating States, I urge you to publicize your pledges and commitments in your media at home. This is Europe's largest human rights conference and communities barely read a word about it in the media. Each of your governments has a significant media platform to promote the messages and commitments you are elevating here today. I hope you will leave this room committed to use it.

2. Stop fearing hate crime data and information about anti-Semitism in your country. The measure of your countries' commitment to protect Jews and others from hate crime is not in the number of hate crimes. The real measure is in the quality of your government's response. The existence of a data collection mechanism is a sign that your government is recognizing the problem and taking the first step to respond. Then, what the state does

with it, is the next important measure. The lack of recorded incidents does not mean your country is safe for a targeted group, it can mean quite the contrary.

3. Fulfill your pledge to monitor and address hate crime. Hate crime data is the essential foundation for a whole range of political, policy education, prevention, and response measures. This monitoring is a powerful tool to confront anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry and it prompts government outreach and police training to identify, report, and respond to hate violence. Governments should maintain official systems of monitoring and reporting to provide accurate data for informed policy decisions to combat violent hate crimes. Participating States should, at a minimum provide ODIHR basic information and data on the nature, incidence, and response to hate crimes as they have committed to do.

4. Convene a “Berlin-plus Ten.” The Ministerial Council in December should endorse a high-level conference marking the tenth anniversary of the landmark Berlin declaration in which States pledged to fight anti-Semitism and which gave birth to ODIHR’s Tolerance and non-Discrimination Program. We urge participating States to register support here at the HDIM for the organization of a high-level meeting in 2014 and committing to high-level participation.

5. Support the specialized work of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Tolerance, and Non-Discrimination Department and promote its reporting, education and training programs and other tools to combat anti-Semitism and hate crime. ODIHR tools, like *Hate Crime Laws: A Practical Guide*, which ADL is proud to have played a role in drafting, encourage governments to partner with communities and empower them to help address hate crime. These tools are designed to help establish a common framework to improve hate crime response with models for lawmakers, community organizations, and law enforcement.

6. Forge links with civil society: States should establish a framework for regular communication between communities and relevant officials and involve communities in efforts to craft and implement policies. States should support ODIHR efforts to build the capacity of non-governmental organizations to serve as a bridge between officials and law enforcement and communities to ensure an effective response.

7. Parliaments should have zero-tolerance for anti-Semitism and bigotry. Voters are free to cast votes for any party on the ballot, but parliamentarians also have the ability to reject the anti-Semitism espoused by some parties and to ensure that parliaments are a platform to showcase a society’s highest values and not its basest ideas. Parliaments can also be a vehicle for positive proactive action of all types. In December 2012, over 150 members of parliaments from 30 countries wrote a letter to the President, Prime Minister, and the Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary to condemn the Jobbik MP’s statement in parliament asking for a list of Jews in government and parliament to be created.

Anti-Semitism and hatred is a shared problem across the OSCE Region and all States, all sectors of society in each of our countries share a stake in our collective effort to combat it.