



**NONE SHALL
BE AFRAID**
FIGHTING ANTI-SEMITISM

IHRA Working Definition of Anti-Semitism

One of the greatest challenges in combating anti-Semitism over the past two decades has been defining the problem for a global audience. Far more than merely a religious freedom issue, anti-Semitism is a human rights matter in the broader sense, as it encapsulates a hatred of Jews based on their identity as members of a unique ethnic and religious group. Many of its contemporary manifestations relate to a hatred of the State of Israel that exceeds the boundaries of legitimate policy criticism and relies on traditional anti-Semitic motifs.

In 2004, B'nai B'rith participated in an international effort to develop a working definition of anti-Semitism for use in comparing incidents and collecting data. In 2005, the European Union Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia (now known as the EU Fundamental Rights Agency) unveiled a non-binding definition intended to generate discussion and serve as a guide in formulating strategies to combat the problem. The EUMC never formally adopted the definition, however.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, an organization comprised of more than 30 member countries, elevated the status of the working definition by adopting a similar one in 2016. Drawn largely from the EUMC definition of 2005, the IHRA definition is also not legally binding, but it has served as a springboard for more than a dozen countries so far to adopt it in their own right. Those governments have used it as a tool for law enforcement officials and public agencies to better understand the modern dimensions of anti-Semitism.

The preliminary language of the working definition reads, "Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities." This definition is followed by a series of 11 illustrative examples that establish how hatred of Jewish people, or the Jewish state as a collective, exhibits itself in the current era.



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