

Coalition of More than 120 NGOs Calls on Facebook to Create a Comprehensive Hate Speech Policy on Anti-Semitism

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WASHINGTON - On Friday, a coalition of more than 120 NGOs submitted a letter to Facebook, urging the social media company to implement a comprehensive hate speech policy on anti-Semitism that incorporates the full International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of Anti-Semitism.

Online Anti-Semitism has spiked in recent years. Community standards on Facebook and other social media platforms have failed to address the growing threat. Facebook's Director of Content Policy Stakeholder Engagement, Peter Stern, shared in a webcast last May that Facebook did not have a robust policy aimed at combatting online anti-Semitism. While he described the usefulness of the IHRA working definition, he admitted that the company did not fully embrace it. More recently, in June, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg publicly committed to revising the company's policies to fight hate speech.

The IHRA definition of anti-Semitism was already adopted by the US State Department and over 40 other countries. The coalition explains "the full IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism provides Facebook an effective, neutral, and nuanced tool to protect Jewish users from hate speech and imagery that incites hate and oftentimes leads to violence."

Organizations joining this call to action include StopAnti-Semitism.org, Zachor Legal Institute, NGO Monitor, Honest Reporting, Zionist Organization for America (ZOA), Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME), Orthodox Jewish Chamber of Commerce, National Council of Young Israel, Jewish Policy Center, RI Coalition for Israel, Haym Salomon Center, Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET), Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), Jewish War Veterans, Israel Christian Nexus, Eagles' Wings, Philos Project, Hasbara Fellowships and National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC).

The letter follows the findings and recommendations outlined in "The New Anti-Semites", which documents how the global rise in Anti-Semitism has been driven by social media. The report, presented by StopAntisemitism.org and Zachor Legal Institute last December, and endorsed by over 60 American NGOs, describes online Anti-Semitism as

"one of the most acute forms of anti-Semitism today."

President of Zachor Legal Institute Marc Greendorfer said:

"Today's Anti-Semitism is particularly potent online. Our New Anti-Semites report demonstrates how it breeds new forms of the age-old hatred manifesting in the delegitimization campaign against Israel which is blatantly anti-Semitic according to the IHRA working

definition of anti-Semitism.

Hate speech and hate crimes are highly correlated. Social media platforms must assume responsibility to protect users and combat this inciteful hatred. The volume and velocity at which anti-Semitism grows online require greater responsibility on behalf of the platforms that enable them to spread. There is no free pass to amplifying anti-Semitism. We're not just fighting hate speech; we're

fighting for people's safety."

ABOUT StopAntisemitism.org:

StopAntisemitism.org works to hold Anti-Semites accountable and to create consequences for their bigoted actions by exposing the threat that they present to all Americans and showing how their ideologies conflict with American values, morals, and principles. To learn more, please visit www.StopAntisemitism.org.

Date
August 7th, 2020

To
Facebook, Inc. Board of Directors
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Open Letter to Facebook: Adopt the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism

Dear Facebook Board of Directors,

We applaud your recent announcement regarding the revision of Facebook policy standards on hate speech, misinformation, and disinformation. We are confident that Facebook can successfully protect and support users, meet corporate social responsibility concerns of stakeholders, and continue to lead the social media industry.

As part of your efforts, we call on you to fully adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism as the cornerstone of Facebook's hate speech policy regarding antisemitism.

Facebook's Director of Content Policy Stakeholder Engagement, Peter Stern, recently attested to the usefulness of the IHRA working definition when Facebook first developed its hate speech policy. However, Mr. Stern admitted that Facebook does not have a policy aimed at combatting online antisemitism. He further admitted that Facebook does not embrace the full adoption of the IHRA working definition because the definition recognizes that modern manifestations of antisemitism relate to Israel.

In accordance with the recommendations outlined in the "The New Antisemites" report, which call on social media platforms to eliminate antisemitic content by adopting the IHRA working definition as the basis for content removal policies, we the undersigned coalition of 128 organizations, urge Facebook to implement a hate speech policy on antisemitism that includes the full IHRA working definition at its core.

Nearly 40 countries have already endorsed or adopted the IHRA working definition in some official capacity, either through their membership in the IHRA or independently. In the United States, in addition to the adoption by the State Department, the recent Executive Order on Combatting Anti-Semitism instructs the Department of Education to consider the IHRA definition when evaluating Title VI Civil Rights Act complaints of discrimination.

The overwhelming majority of civil society organizations at the forefront of efforts to combat antisemitism endorse and encourage the use and adoption of the IHRA working definition. Today's antisemitism undoubtedly includes the delegitimization of Israel's right to exist. This bigotry is expressed in various ways, such as the rejection of Jewish self-determination, Holocaust revisionism and denial, and the application of double standards toward the Jewish state and people.

Will Facebook join the ranks of the historians, advocates, activists, lawmakers, and leaders who compiled the IHRA working definition? Will Facebook take responsibility and move toward removing the scourge of antisemitism from today's most important online public square?

Jews today, like many other minority communities, are being targeted and attacked in record numbers. They experience physical violence, harassment, and discrimination offline and online.

Jews overwhelmingly report that online antisemitism is the most acute form of Jew-hatred they experience.

The full IHRA working definition of antisemitism provides Facebook an effective, neutral, and nuanced tool to protect Jewish users from hate speech and imagery that incites hate and oftentimes leads to violence. While the impact of online hate speech, misinformation, and disinformation on our society continues to be researched and explored, we cannot afford to lose any more time in fighting this bigotry and preventing violence.

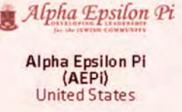
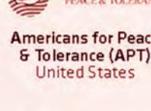
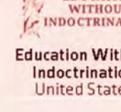
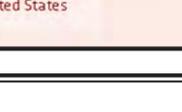
We urge Facebook to put words into action and power behind commitment -- and fully adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.

The open letter to Facebook.

2 The Jewish Post August 14, 2020

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Signed,

 Academic Engagement Network United States	 Acción y Comunicación sobre Oriente Medio (ACOM) Spain	 ACT.IL Worldwide	 Am Yisrael Foundation United States	 European Leadership Network (ELNET) Europe	 Jewish Community Council of Victoria Australia
 ACT Zionist Council Australia	 Alleanza Per Israele Italy	 Alpha Epsilon Pi (AEPi) United States	 Alums for Campus Fairness United States	 Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET) United States	 Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa (JIMENA) United States
 American-Israeli Collaboration Enterprise (AICE) United States	 Americans for Peace & Tolerance (APT) United States	 Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) Australia	 Belgian Federation of Jewish Organizations Belgium	 Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) Canada	 Licra Paris France
 B'nai B'rith Canada Canada	 Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM) United Kingdom	 Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) United Kingdom	 Center for Information & Documentation Israel (CIDI) The Netherlands	 Europe Israel Public Affairs (EIPA) Europe	 Middle East Forum (MEF) United States
 Christians and Jews United for Israel (CJUI) United States	 Club Z United States	 Coalition for Jewish Values United States	 Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis (CAMERA) Worldwide	 Israel Britain Alliance United Kingdom	 NGO Monitor Israel
 Conexión Israel Latin America	 Creative Community For Peace United States	 Eagles Wings United States	 European Maccabi Confederation (EMC) Europe	 Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (JCPA) Israel	 Online Hate Prevention Institute United States
 Con Israel Y Por La Paz Argentina	 Israel Sin Fronteras Ecuador	 Feldman Foundation Texas United States	 Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) United States	 Jewish Student Union (JSUD) Germany	 Jewish War Veterans of the USA United States
 Executive Council of Australian Jewry Australia	 Feldman Foundation California United States	 God's Heaven Universal Church Brazil	 Hasbara Fellowships United States	 Hatzaad Hasheni Latin America	 Maccabi World Union Worldwide
 Fuel for Truth United States	 Fuente Latina Worldwide	 Israel Christian Nexus United States	 Honest Reporting Worldwide	 Honesty Concerned Germany	 Michael and Andrea Leven Family Foundation United States
 Haym Salomon Center United States	 Hebraica Brazil	 Hochberg Family Foundation United States	 Honest Reporting Worldwide	 Ireland Israel Alliance Ireland	 My Truth Israel
 I Like Israel (ILI) Germany	 InfoEquitable France	 IMPACT-se United States	 Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) United States	 International Movement for Peace and Coexistence Belgium	 Israel American Council (IAC) United States
 Northern Ireland Friends of Israel United Kingdom	 Osservatorio Antisemitismo della CDEC Foundation Italy	 NC Coalition for Israel United States	 Israel on Campus Coalition (ICC) United States	 Orthodox Jewish Chamber of Commerce United States	 Mideast Freedom Forum Berlin (MFFB) Germany
 National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC) United States	 Maccabee United States	 Jewish Policy Center United States			