



## **JEWISH COMMUNITY APPLAUDS ONTARIO'S ADOPTION OF IHRA DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM**

**October 27, 2020**

**TORONTO, ON** – Today, the Government of Ontario became the first province in Canada to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, as endorsed by consensus at the 2016 IHRA plenary.

The IHRA definition is the product of decades of research, study and deliberation by many of the world's foremost experts and was accordingly adopted by consensus by the governments of more than 30 countries in 2016. The European Union and the United Nations both support it, as do governments across the globe representing every political stripe.

The IHRA definition is strongly supported by the Jewish community in Ontario, its institutions and organizations. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), B'nai Brith Canada, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC), and JSpaceCanada applauded the announcement.

### **Quotes**

"We applaud the Government of Ontario for joining the dozens of other governments around the world in adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism, a vital tool in the ongoing fight against hatred and discrimination targeting the Jewish community in Ontario. Jews continue to be subjected to vile rhetoric and propaganda and still remain the minority group most targeted by hate crime, which is nothing less than an affront to our basic democratic values as Ontarians.

"By making clear what antisemitism is and looks like, the IHRA definition will allow civil society and government to work together more effectively in our shared goal of eliminating hatred in our province." - **Michael Levitt, President and CEO, Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC).**

"Today the Government of Ontario joins a growing number of jurisdictions, at all levels of government and around the world, in taking action against the growing threat posed to our society by antisemitism. Antisemitism cannot be effectively addressed without being properly defined. The IHRA definition is the internationally accepted guideline for identifying anti-Jewish hate, having been adopted by dozens of countries and other institutions, including Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union."

"The IHRA definition provides a framework that can help guide Ontario government institutions interested in understanding contemporary forms of antisemitism, such as Holocaust denial. - **Shimon Koffler Fogel, President and CEO, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).**

"At a time of rising antisemitism in Ontario, Canada, and around the world, the adoption of the IHRA Working Definition, including its illustrative examples, is a major step forward. From high schools and university campuses to police hate-crime units, this announcement promises much-needed relief for Jews across the province."

"Ontario will now be equipped to identify and react to incidents of antisemitism in a clear and precise way, and be better positioned to prevent antisemitism and react to it whenever it rears its head anywhere in the province. We applaud the Ontario government for becoming the first province in Canada to adopt the IHRA definition." - **Michael Mostyn, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada.**

"Our community is blessed with many diverse voices and opinions, but there is clear consensus about the need to combat the alarming rise of antisemitism. We cannot protect our society from the scourge of antisemitism if we are unable to name it, to identify it properly, and to address it consistently. By adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism, the Government of Ontario has demonstrated a commitment to implementing human rights and anti-racist policies.

"The IHRA definition of antisemitism has been given broad acceptance by Jewish communities around the world. Ontario is following the anti-oppression norm that victimized groups can best define the terms that describe discrimination against them" - **Karen Mock, President, JSpaceCanada.**

**For more information, please contact:**

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**JSpaceCanada** provides Canadians with a safe space to have crucial conversations about Israel's future. We support a two-state solution to the conflict, with safety and security for Israel and its neighbours. We provide an alternative to both the vehemently anti-Israel left and the rigidly pro-Israel right, with room for everyone to engage in civil and informed discussion. We strive to offer a progressive Jewish perspective on human rights and social justice – in Israel, Canada, and throughout the world.