



London Mayor Sadiq Khan signs historic pledge to fight antisemitism

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May 26, 2016 - Board of Deputies President Jonathan Arkush has welcomed Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan's decision to join mayors from across Europe and the United States in signing an AJC pledge to take action against antisemitism in their communities.

The Board of Deputies, Community Security Trust and the London Jewish Forum approached Mayor Khan to sign the pledge, which has been endorsed by more than 150 mayors from 30 European countries.

The pledge is part of the Mayors United Against Antisemitism initiative, developed by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in July 2015 and launched in Europe later that year. The Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, was the first European Mayor to sign the pledge, followed by those from Frankfurt, Madrid, Milan and Copenhagen. More than 300 mayors from 50 American states also supported the project.

Jonathan Arkush, said: "Antisemitism is one of the greatest challenges facing Jews in London and across the country. Just two weeks into the job, Sadiq Khan has signed up to AJC's campaign against antisemitism. Taken together with his attendance at the Yom HaShoah Holocaust commemoration event, this sets a very positive tone that we hope will be replicated throughout his mayoralty. We also thank Barnet and Camden Assembly Member Andrew Dismore for his particular role in championing this initiative in City Hall."

Mayor Khan, said: "Sadly, for many Londoners, antisemitism is a very present problem. As a British Muslim, I am no stranger to discrimination and prejudice. That's why, as Mayor for all Londoners, I am determined to fight racism in all its forms and will make challenging hate crime a priority. I am proud to sign the Mayors United Against Anti-Semitism pledge and I will encourage other Mayors across the country and Europe to do the same, to help send the message far and wide that anti-Semitism is totally unacceptable and can never be justified."

David Harris, Chief Executive Officer of the American Jewish Committee, said: "The Mayor's support for this initiative is special for three reasons. First, as Mayor, he has demonstrated continuity in opposition to all forms of antisemitism, as his predecessor Boris Johnson was also a signatory. Second, with all the recent concerns expressed about currents within Britain's Labour Party regarding antisemitism, this is a particularly welcome and important development, since he is such a prominent member of the Labour Party. And third, Sadiq Khan is the first mayor of the Muslim faith of a major Western capital. Thus, his signature sends a very powerful message not only to the London Jewish community, but well beyond, about potential friendship, support and cooperation."

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