
Press Release

IHRA Plenary

Meetings Bucharest



23-26 May 2016

IHRA Plenary Meetings

Bucharest, Romania

26 May 2016

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopts a working definition of antisemitism. The consensus decision on the [adopted decision](#) was reached after in-depth discussion of the issue during the IHRA Plenary meetings held in Bucharest from 23-26 May.

“With humanity still scarred by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, antisemitism and xenophobia, the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils. Together we must uphold the terrible truth of the Holocaust against those who deny it.

Stockholm Declaration, 2000

[IHRA Chair](#), Ambassador Mihnea Constantinescu stated:

“All IHRA Member Countries share concern that incidents of antisemitism are steadily rising and agree that IHRA’s Member Countries and indeed IHRA’s experts need political tools with which to fight this scourge. IHRA’s 31 member countries- 24 of which are EU member countries- are committed to the [Stockholm Declaration](#) and thereby to fighting the evil of antisemitism through coordinated international political action.”

The IHRA Chair continued: “By adopting this working definition, the IHRA is setting an example of responsible conduct for other international for and hopes to inspire them also to take action on a legally binding working definition.”

The Chair underlined the fact that as a body of [31 Member Countries](#), [ten Observer Countries](#), and [seven international partner organisations](#), with a unique mandate to focus on education, research and remembrance of the Holocaust, the IHRA was the appropriate body to adopt a working definition of antisemitism. The IHRA Chair noted the fundamental role that the German OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office played in facilitating the adoption of the working definition.

Mark Weitzman, Chair of the IHRA Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial, which proposed the adoption of the definition in 2015, said: “In order to begin to address the problem of antisemitism, there must be clarity about what antisemitism actually is. This is not a simple question. The [adopted working definition](#) helps provide guidance in answer to this challenging question. Crucially, the definition adopted by the IHRA is endorsed by experts, is relevant and is of practical applicability. Together with the IHRA adopted [Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion](#), the working definition of antisemitism provides another tool in the IHRA tool kit for combatting antisemitism.”

Notes for Editors

The IHRA held its first bi-annual Plenary meeting under the Romanian Chairmanship from 23-26 May 2016 in Bucharest where over four days around 200 experts and policymakers from all over the world met to discuss the Holocaust as a contemporary political issue.

The IHRA's Committee on Holocaust Denial and Antisemitism was set up in order to form a common approach to address the upsurge in antisemitism and Holocaust denial and trivialization. The Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial is tasked with assessing the situation and submitting to the Plenary annual recommendations on measures to be taken to fight antisemitism in all its different forms.

[IHRA](#) is a unique intergovernmental organization which places political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance and research both nationally and internationally.

For a picture of the IHRA's year in review, please see the organization's online annual report: www.holocaustremembrance.com/annualreport

If you would like to cover the IHRA Plenary meetings or the working definition of antisemitism covered in this press release, please send an email with details of the media outlet you work for to the email address below.

[#IHRAinBucharest](#)

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Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust

We, High Representatives of Governments at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, declare that:

- 1. The Holocaust (Shoah) fundamentally** challenged the foundations of civilization. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning. After half a century, it remains an event close enough in time that survivors can still bear witness to the horrors that engulfed the Jewish people. The terrible suffering of the many millions of other victims of the Nazis has left an indelible scar across Europe as well.
- 2. The magnitude of the Holocaust,** planned and carried out by the Nazis, must be forever seared in our collective memory. The selfless sacrifices of those who defied the Nazis, and sometimes gave their own lives to protect or rescue the Holocaust's victims, must also be inscribed in our hearts. The depths of that horror, and the heights of their heroism, can be touchstones in our understanding of the human capacity for evil and for good.
- 3. With humanity still scarred** by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, antisemitism and xenophobia, the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils. Together we must uphold the terrible truth of the Holocaust against those who deny it. We must strengthen the moral commitment of our peoples, and the political commitment of our governments, to ensure that future generations can understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences.
- 4. We pledge to strengthen** our efforts to promote education, remembrance and research about the Holocaust, both in those of our countries that have already done much and those that choose to join this effort.
- 5. We share a commitment** to encourage the study of the Holocaust in all its dimensions. We will promote education about the Holocaust in our schools and universities, in our communities and encourage it in other institutions.
- 6. We share a commitment** to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to honour those who stood against it. We will encourage appropriate forms of Holocaust remembrance, including an annual Day of Holocaust Remembrance, in our countries.
- 7. We share a commitment** to throw light on the still obscured shadows of the Holocaust. We will take all necessary steps to facilitate the opening of archives in order to ensure that all documents bearing on the Holocaust are available to researchers.
- 8. It is appropriate** that this, the first major international conference of the new millenium, declares its commitment to plant the seeds of a better future amidst the soil of a bitter past. We empathize with the victims' suffering and draw inspiration from their struggle. Our commitment must be to remember the victims who perished, respect the survivors still with us, and reaffirm humanity's common aspiration for mutual understanding and justice.

About the IHRA

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is an intergovernmental body whose purpose is to place political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance and research both nationally and internationally.

IHRA (formerly the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, or ITF) was initiated in 1998 by former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson. Persson decided to establish an international organization that would expand Holocaust education worldwide, and asked then President Bill Clinton and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair to join him in this effort. Persson also developed the idea of an international forum of governments interested in discussing Holocaust education, which took place in Stockholm between 27-29 January 2000. The Forum was attended by the representatives of 46 governments including; 23 Heads of State or Prime Ministers and 14 Deputy Prime Ministers or Ministers. The Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust was the outcome of the Forum's deliberations and is the foundation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

IHRA currently has 31 member countries, ten observer countries and seven Permanent International Partners. Members must be committed to the Stockholm Declaration and to the implementation of national policies and programs in support of Holocaust education, remembrance, and research. The national government of each member country appoints and sends a delegation

to IHRA meetings that is composed of both government representatives and national experts, providing a unique link between the two levels.

In addition to the Academic, Education, Memorials and Museums, and Communication Working Groups, specialized committees have been established to address antisemitism and Holocaust denial, the genocide of the Roma, and comparative approaches to genocide studies. The IHRA is also in the process of implementing a Multi-Year Work Plan that focuses on killing sites, access to archives, educational research, and Holocaust Memorial Days.

One of IHRA's key roles is to contribute to the funding of relevant projects through its grant strategy. The purpose of the Grant Programme is to foster international dialogue and the exchange of expertise, increase government involvement in program creation, and target projects with strong multilateral elements in order to create sustainable structures for Holocaust education, remembrance, and research.

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