



Dear

We write to you as International Envoys and Coordinators on Antisemitism to urge your football club to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism.

The IHRA was founded in 1998 and is an alliance of Member States that seek to promote Holocaust remembrance and combat antisemitism. On 26 May 2016, the IHRA adopted a working definition of antisemitism, which has also been formally adopted by the Governments of the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Hungary, the United States, the European Parliament, and over 30 other countries in line with the recommendations from the United Nations¹. Please see the appendix for the full working definition.

Many Premier League clubs are adopting the definition and are signing it in public. Chelsea Football Club, as an example, took the lead and signed it through Chairman Bruce Buck and Frank Lampard. They have been followed by West Ham United, AFC Bournemouth and Borussia Dortmund. Other national and international clubs have agreed to do so this autumn.

There has been a rise in antisemitism around the world, which has only been exacerbated by the spread of the Coronavirus. Antisemitic conspiracies have been used on posters at rallies where protesters have been demonstrating against government restrictions and for the reopening of their countries. Combating the rise of antisemitism is an ever-important priority.

Clubs so far have adopted this definition of antisemitism as a statement of their values. It not only sets clear guidelines, but also acts as a specific reference point for employees, stewards, and fans on what is antisemitism. It is a working definition, not a legal definition, meaning its whole purpose is to raise awareness and to be of practical assistance in addressing any incident of antisemitism and in preventing future incidents.

Its adoption will of course send out a very strong message about your club's ethos that will be very warmly received by local and global Jewish communities and especially Jewish football supporters and employees. This message is key for all citizens and football lovers, as antisemitism and all forms of racism and xenophobia constitute an attack on democracy and is contrary to our values of human rights, equality, freedom, respect of human dignity, regardless of identity, origin or belief.

We ask that your club join this vital effort and adopt the IHRA definition to strengthen the resolve of the Jewish community and support the international work on combating antisemitism in football. Your football club can play an important part in this.

Yours Sincerely,

Lord John Mann, HM Government's Independent for Adviser on Antisemitism

Dr Felix Klein, Federal Government Commissioner Jewish Life in Germany and the Fight against Antisemitism

Elan S. Carr, United States Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism

Professor Milena Santerini, National coordinator for the fight against antisemitism in Italy

Ambassador Michaela Küchler, Chair, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Katharina von Schnurbein, European Commission Coordinator on combatting Antisemitism and fostering Jewish life

Ahmed Shaheed, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief

Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism

Ambassador Alexandru Victor Micula, Special Representative for combating Antisemitism

Szabolcs Takács, Special Envoy of the Government of Hungary on Antisemitism, former Chair of IHRA (2015/16)

Ambassador Jovan Tegovski, Special Envoy on combating Antisemitism – North Macedonia

Dr. Ringo Ringvee, Adviser, Estonian Ministry of the Interior

Dr. Efstathios C. Lianos Liantis, Special Envoy on Combating Antisemitism and Preserving Holocaust

Remembrance, Head of the Greek Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)

Frédéric Potier, Préfet, National delegate against racism, antisemitism and LGBTphobia (France)

Appendix

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitismⁱⁱ

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries). **Criminal acts are antisemitic** when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews. **Antisemitic discrimination** is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

ⁱ <https://undocs.org/A/74/358> (recommendation in para 78)

ⁱⁱ <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism?usergroup=7>