

## RESOLUTION: 1510gb-4

### FREEDOM OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

**The Governing Board of the World Jewish Congress, meeting in Rome on 27 October 2015 on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Nostra Aetate* declaration,**

**NOTES** that following the promulgation of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions *Nostra Aetate* by Pope Paul VI on 28 October 1965, Judeo-Catholic relations improved significantly and are today better than at any moment over the past 2,000 years;

**RECALLS** that *Nostra Aetate* condemns all forms of anti-Semitic expressions, made at any time by anyone, and that the declaration helped to significantly reduce anti-Semitism within the Catholic Church;

**PRAISES** the central and proactive role played by Popes John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis in strengthening bonds between Catholics and Jews;

**WELCOMES** the close cooperation between Catholic and Jewish communities in many countries nowadays on key issues which were made possible by *Nostra Aetate*, such as the fight against discrimination and racial prejudice, the quest for peace and social justice;

**RECORDS ITS DEEP GRATITUDE** to Pope Francis for his unwavering support and friendship for the Jewish people and the State of Israel and his commitment to eradicating anti-Semitism and hatred;

**NOTES** with concern that around the world, religious freedom is severely restricted in many countries and worshippers of many faith groups are being subjected to discrimination, violence and abuse for simply exercising their faith, or for identifying with a certain religion;

**RECALLS** that according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status", and that according to the UN Charter and the International Covenants on Human Rights, infringements upon the right to religious freedom are punishable by the organization and its judicial body, the International Court of Justice;

**LAMENTS** the brutal persecution and slaughter of Christians in some parts of the world, in particular the Middle East, and expresses the solidarity of Jews with our Christian brethren;

**NOTES** with concern the advance of extremism and fundamentalism in parts of the Islamic world and the rise of terrorist movements such as the Islamic State whose first victims are moderate Muslims;

**ADOPTED VERSION**

**CONDEMNS** the fact that, due to incitement by hate preachers, perverse acts of terrorism are perpetrated by people in the name of religion;

**URGES** the international community, in particular the United Nations and its competent bodies such as the Human Rights Council, to address the issues of freedom of religion and religious persecution as a matter of priority and to ensure that the United Nations' founding principles are properly implemented everywhere in the world;

**CALLS ON** Pope Francis to support an initiative to bring together leaders of all major faith communities in order to promote cooperation, peace, human rights and social cohesion.