

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA STUDENT UNION (UMSU)

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

A RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING, DEFINING, AND CONDEMNING ANTISEMITISM

INTRODUCED BY:

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STUDENTS SUPPORTING ISRAEL

WHEREAS, the UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA STUDENT UNION exists to serve students and strives to enhance student life and the quality of education through consultation, representation, and advocacy. A student union for students, by students.¹

WHEREAS, the UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA's mission is to create, preserve, communicate and apply knowledge, contributing to the cultural, social and economic well-being of the people of Manitoba, Canada and the world. The University of Manitoba's values include: Academic Freedom, Accountability, Collegiality, Equity and Inclusion, Excellence, Innovation, Integrity, Respect and Sustainability.²

WHEREAS, Jewish students constitute an important part of the UMSU community yet remain distinguishable from the majority by common ethnic and cultural characteristics.

NOTING THAT, the UMSU Jewish community is thus a distinct and significant cultural community within the UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA, which UMSU is constitutionally bound to support, protect and defend.

NOTING THAT, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) defines antisemitism as "a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards 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." and includes numerous illustrative examples.³

1. <https://umsu.ca/about/organization-summary/>
2. <https://umanitoba.ca/about/mission.html>
3. <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

FURTHER NOTHING THAT, the above IHRA Working Definition of ANTISEMITISM was adopted by the Government of Canada as part of *Canadas Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022* and the Government of Ontario.⁴ The definition was recognized by the United States of America under Title VI⁴, as well as, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Israel, France, Austria, Scotland, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Moldova, Albania, Greece, Cyprus, North Macedonia, Serbia, Argentina, Bahrain, the European Parliament, and countless other governmental institutions and universities across the world.

RECOGNIZING THAT, according to Statistics Canada, Canadian Jews remain the most targeted minority group for police reported hate crimes in Canada. The Jewish community was subject to approximately 20% of hate crimes, despite only making up 1.04% of the Canadian population¹⁰

RECOGNIZING THAT, the Canadian Prairie Region announced a 142% increased in the number of Anti-Semitic incidents in 2018 which has only increased since.¹¹

RECOGNIZING THAT, in recent years, Antisemitic incidents have hit an all-time high across North America^{5/6}, such as:

In Canada,

- Antisemitic bullying in public schools such as a modern blood libel being promoted in the Peel District School Board (<https://www.peelschools.org/media/newsreleases/Pages/Article.aspx?art-id=2529>)
- The circulation of hateful publications and broadcasts, including “Your Ward News” and misogynistic and antisemitism “newspaper” whos editors have been found guilty of hate promotion (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/your-ward-news-james-sears-sentenced-1.5256452>)
- The use of hateful rhetoric, such as at a protest at Celebration Square in Mississauga, Ontario in which protesters chanted “the Jews are our dogs” in Arabic. (<https://www.cija.ca/pr-cija-disgusted-by-jews-are-our-dogs-zionists-not-welcome/>)

- The establishment of white nationalist organization such as the “Canadian Nationalist Party” whose leader Travis Patron, peddled vile hatred, referring to Jews as “swindlers,” “snakes,” and “inside manipulators,” while calling for the “parasitic tribe” to be removed from Canada “once and for all” (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/rcmp-nationalist-party-1.5198409>)
- Antisemitic harassment and property damage during Jewish high holy days such as a father and son who were accosted in Thornhill, Ontario outside of a synagogue. (https://www.bnaibrith.ca/attacks_in_ontario_during_jewish_new_year)

In the United States, the Jewish community has faced extreme and violent attacks including shootings at the Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue (2018), Poway Chabad Synagogue (2018), a kosher grocery store in Jersey City (2019) and the Kansas City Jewish Community Centre (2014), a violent stabbing during Chanukah in Monsey New York (2019), and the chanting of “Jews will not replace us” during the white supremacist demonstration in Charlottesville (2017).

RECOGNIZING THAT, since 2018 there has been a notable spike in attacks against Jews in academic settings across North America^{8/9}, such as:

The refusal of the University of Toronto Graduate Students’ Union to endorse a campaign for kosher food on campus because it was sponsored by the local Hillel, a violent protest that broke out in response an event being hosted by a Jewish club at York University, and a threat from the Students Society of McGill University Legislative Council to remove a Jewish student from her position on the Board of Directors if she travelled to Israel.

4. <https://www.ontario.ca/orders-in-council/oc-14502020>
5. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-combating-anti-semitism/>
6. <https://www.adl.org/what-we-do/anti-semitism/antisemitism-in-the-us>
7. https://www.bnaibrith.ca/tags/annual_audit_of_antisemitic_incidents
8. <https://www.friendsofsimonwiesenthalcenter.com/news/2019s-most-antisemitic-incidents-in-canada>

NOTING THAT, due to the aforementioned incidents, an aspiration for safety is not yet a reality for Jewish students along with other minorities and underrepresented groups.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the University of Manitoba Student Union (UMSU) at the University of Manitoba unreservedly condemn all acts of racism, discrimination, bigotry, and violence against the Jewish community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Manitoba Student Union (UMSU) adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism and include this definition into “Position #7: Equitable Campus” of the official UMSU Position Statement Booklet under “UMSU Supports”.

9. <https://www.adl.org/news/press-releases/adl-urges-action-after-fbi-reports-jews-were-target-of-most-religious-based-hate>
10. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190722/dq190722a-eng.htm?HPA=1>
11. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/jewish-hate-targeting-canada-1.5115890>
12. <http://umanitoba.ca/about-um/equity-diversity-inclusion>