

TO: Assembly

FROM: Miriam Makin

RE: Antisemitism at Durham University

DATE: 11 March 2021

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## **Policy on Antisemitism at Durham University**

### **Assembly Notes:**

1. There is currently no definition for antisemitism within the Union
2. 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).
3. 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.
4. Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.
5. The definition has already been adopted by the UK government to “ensure that culprits will not be able to get away with being antisemitic because the term is ill-defined, or because different organisations or bodies have different interpretations of it”.
6. The NUS and the European Commission have also adopted the definition.

### **Assembly Believes:**

1. There are many contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere, with examples such as
  - a. Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion
  - b. 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
  - c. 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
  - d. 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)
  - e. Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
  - f. 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.
  - g. Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour
  - h. Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation
  - i. Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g. claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis
  - j. Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis

- k. Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel
2. Antisemitism today is more complex than the antisemitism of decades past, but the hatred it incites is equally dangerous.
3. Durham's student union should follow the above examples and endeavour to combat antisemitism in its contemporary form to prevent and combat an escalation of antisemitism in rhetoric or in action
4. The passing of the motion will also make Jewish students safe, welcome and valued members of the student community

**Assembly Resolves:**

1. To adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism: "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."
2. To aim to uphold a definition made by Jews to protect Jews, in order to adequately address contemporary concerns and manifestations of antisemitism on campus
3. To announce the definition has been adopted and the reasons for doing so
4. To refer to the definition in order to settle reported cases of antisemitism in the students' complaints procedure
5. To invite the SU Board of Trustees to adopt this policy as organisational policy.