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Statement by the Community Security Trust

In the aftermath of the dramatic rise in antisemitic incidents since last year, and terrorist attacks on Jewish institutions in Brussels, Paris, and Copenhagen, Jewish communities are asking themselves if they have a future in Europe.

Some thousands have already fled, to Israel, to Canada, to the US and the UK, and more are considering moving.

This is not our problem; it's yours. The governments of the OSCE region bear a responsibility for securing the safety of their Jewish citizens. It is your duty to ensure that normative Jewish life can continue, and it is the right of Jews to demand that their governments fulfil their responsibilities in this respect.

Following the 2014 Berlin High Level Conference devoted to the security needs of Jewish communities, the Basel Ministerial Council Declaration No.8 committed Participating States to doing more to secure their Jewish citizens, including funding physical security precautions. Some States responded positively and now provide good security for their Jewish citizens, including access control and manned guarding for Jewish institutions.

Others are failing their Jewish citizens, and have yet do anything more than talk platitudes.

But Jews do not want to live behind high walls, nor do they want to fear walking on the streets.

They especially do not want to be held hostage to the outcome of tension between Israel and its Palestinian neighbours which is such a marked feature in the rise of antisemitism over the past ten or so years.

We have a right to expect states to take the initiative, and to ensure that education of all students incorporates the history of Jews' contribution to European culture and science, greater awareness and understanding of contemporary antisemitism, as well as the history of the Holocaust and the learning that emerges from this. We also have

the right to expect Participating States to facilitate continuing cooperation between Jewish and other faith communities.

In these respects we are pleased to note that the OSCE plans to take forward the recommendations from the Vienna meeting held in April between some Participating states, civil society experts and Jewish community representatives and to now formulate concrete proposals for a programme to address these concerns.

Jewish representative bodies also believe that their work to combat antisemitism, and indeed that of the European agencies, would be assisted by the use of the Working Definition on Antisemitism, which the OSCE helped to draft and which is designed to assist human rights bodies and law enforcement agencies.

These concrete proposals will have to be seriously employed by Participating States if they wish to demonstrate their commitment to their Jewish citizens' security and communal well-being.