



INTERNATIONAL
**HOLOCAUST
REMEMBRANCE**
ALLIANCE

29 October 2020

Commemoration Event: Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting

“Why do they hate us?” Antisemitism Across Generations

I would like to thank all those who organized this important event, and express my deepest solidarity with the survivors, the families of the victims, and all those in attendance.

I accepted this invitation with a heavy heart.

The shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue was an event that shook the world – its effects reverberated from Pittsburgh through all of the Americas to Europe and well beyond. It made clear, in the starkest terms, that Jewish communities were still vulnerable – that our democratic, pluralistic societies were still vulnerable. That the scourge of antisemitism was still very much a threat, and that expressions of the evil of white supremacy were becoming more violent, more extreme. Hate-filled messages spewed online were being brought into the real world with ease. Alarming, these messages were inching towards the mainstream.

The problem of antisemitism, then as now, is not confined to the borders of the United States. It has always been, and is increasingly, an international one. Such a problem requires an international response.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, the IHRA, works towards a world that remembers the Holocaust, towards a world without genocide. This is a world where antisemitism and white supremacy have no place, a world of pluralistic and democratic values. No one NGO or institute or country can arrive there alone.

The IHRA recognizes that civil society, experts and governments must all work together to build a shared understanding around key issues, to create a broader and stronger coalition that can address issues like antisemitism, like Holocaust denial and distortion.

Practical tools like the IHRA’s working definition of antisemitism can provide a mutual starting point for discussion. They can serve as educational and awareness-raising tools, sensitizing individuals and institutions to the existence of antisemitism and the mechanisms behind it.

History has taught us what can happen when antisemitism reaches the mainstream. Antisemitism is not a Jewish issue. It is an issue for all societies in which it grows. The IHRA’s 34 Member



Countries share an unwavering commitment to these principles. This shooting was an attack on all of us. Together, we must strive towards a world where it cannot happen again.