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January 27, 2015

The Honorable Martin Schulz, President  
European Parliament  
Wiertzstraat 60  
Brussels, Belgium

Dear President Schulz:

I write to you today to express my deep concerns about the safety and security of the Jewish communities throughout Europe. Following an eruption of anti-Semitic activity in Europe that most recently included the horrific attack at a kosher supermarket in Paris, more should be done to protect Jewish institutions in Europe.

As you know, anti-Semitism has been surging throughout Europe, culminating in the brutal and deadly attack in Paris earlier this month. In the past year alone there has been a deadly attack in Belgium, explosive devices at Jewish locations in Holland, Germany and France, as well as vandalism and desecration of cemeteries and synagogues in Hungary, Italy, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. An escalation in destructive and violent anti-Semitism has been reported all across the continent.

Jewish life in Europe is under attack. In the past weeks, synagogues have closed their doors, attendance is down at Jewish schools, and business has declined at Jewish stores – all due to safety concerns. With Europe's liberal border policies, security for Jewish institutions should be extended to every country.

The European Union should create a special European Union Envoy to combat anti-Semitism. The United States maintains a similar position that has been successful in spearheading U.S. efforts against similar extremism. The creation of this special envoy position would allow for the coordination and implementation of efforts between the European Union, member countries, Jewish communities, and other stakeholders and community organizations.

The European Union and each member country should also invest and prioritize the protection of the Jewish communities of Europe, including increased security personnel presence in cooperation with local leaders. Additional resources for training volunteer security would complement increased security personnel in guarding Jewish sites. I hope the European Parliament will explore additional ways to prevent future anti-Semitic attacks and violence and better provide security to Jewish institutions.

Anti-Semitism is not just an issue impacting the Jewish community. History instructs that allowing anti-Semitism to flourish inevitably leads to community destabilization and attacks on other religious and ethnic minorities. The actions that Europe takes in response to the current crisis of anti-Semitism will have lasting implications on the future of Europe and its stability.

Sincerely,

  
Patrick E. Murphy  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS