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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION:

**Written statement* submitted by United Nations Watch,
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[4 July 2005]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION

“The United Nations emerged from the ashes of the Holocaust,” said UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, speaking at a UN seminar in June 2004. “And a human rights agenda that fails to address anti-Semitism denies its own history.” The Secretary-General emphasized that “the human rights machinery of the United Nations has been mobilized in the battle against anti-Semitism, and this must continue.”

In order to facilitate the work of the UN human rights machinery in fighting anti-Semitism, United Nations Watch submits the Working Definition of Antisemitism of the European Union’s Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC).¹ The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) was involved in the consultations for preparing this definition.

Following the recent Cordoba Declaration, issued at the OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance, UN Watch urges all relevant bodies of the UN system—including the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Committee, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (in particular, the Anti-Discrimination Unit), and the relevant Special Rapporteurs—to implement Secretary-General Annan’s call for action against anti-Semitism.² The EUMC Working Definition provided below ought to be one useful tool in this effort.

European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia Working Definition of Antisemitism

The purpose of this document is to provide a practical guide for identifying incidents, collecting data, and supporting the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism.

Working definition: “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.”

In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

¹ <http://eumc.eu.int/eumc/material/pub/AS/AS-WorkingDefinition-draft.pdf>

² For further information on what the United Nations can do to combat anti-Semitism, see Hillel Neuer, “How the UN Can Help Fight Anti-Semitism,” *The National Post*, January 26, 2005. (Available at http://unwatch.org/pbworks/NationalPost_antisemitism.html.)

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- 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.

Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.

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).

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.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

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