



THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

Dear Committee Members,

Please accept this submission on behalf of the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism for the special session to consider tackling racism and religious discrimination which has been prepared by the group secretary Danny Stone.

You have asked a number of questions and I will seek to address some of them in this submission however I strongly recommend that committee clerks review the two major reports we have published following our inquiries into antisemitism and specifically the executive summaries and recommendations. I would also draw their attention to the 2016 update to the 2015 antisemitism report. All of the relevant material can be found on the group website at:

<http://antisemitism.org.uk/publications/materials-publications/>

1.1 Background:

The APPG Against Antisemitism is a cross-party group with membership from both house of parliament and since 2005 I have been its chair. That year, I commissioned an inquiry into the state of antisemitism in the UK. The 14 MPs involved found that there had been a rise in antisemitism in the UK and published a report with 35 recommendations in 2006. The then Labour government responded, unusually for an all-party report, with two Command Papers over two years and the Coalition Government issued their own paper in 2010. The coalition released the final response to the 2006 inquiry in December 2014.

1.2 Results of the 2006 Antisemitism Inquiry

The APPG Against Antisemitism has worked successfully with Government and other partners to implement the inquiry recommendations and other measures. A summary of some of the successes, achieved together with key stakeholders were as follows:

- A landmark all-party inquiry into antisemitism and three Government responses
- The establishment of a unique Whitehall Government Working Group on antisemitism
- An agreement reached for all police forces to record antisemitic hate crimes and the first official antisemitic hate crimes statistics being published by the police
- A funding agreement for security needs of Jewish faith schools in the state system
- A Crown Prosecution Service Review into the disparity between antisemitic incidents and convictions
- The creation of a Government backed school-linking interfaith programme
- Research into modern discursive antisemitism funded by the Government
- The appointment of a UK Government Envoy for Post-Holocaust issues
- Two Ministerial conferences and international action plans on internet hate
- The publication of a full all-party inquiry report into electoral conduct

- International replication of the APPG Inquiry model.

1.3 Results of the 2013 Electoral Conduct Inquiry:

In October 2013, a cross-party parliamentary panel of inquiry, chaired by Natascha Engel MP published its inquiry into electoral conduct with a particular focus on racism and discrimination in campaigning. The report, inspired by the recommendations of the 2006 All-Party Inquiry into antisemitism set out 30 recommendations for improving elections and was welcomed on a cross-party basis by the Prime Minister and many others. Many recommendations were implemented and amongst other successes, the following are notable achievements:

- The Law Commission's consultation on electoral law was framed in part by the Inquiry.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published new guidance on the role of equality and human rights law for local authorities, parties and candidates
- The police improved training, guidance, communications and other aspects of their work
- The Electoral Commission broadened its stakeholder relations; signposted relevant guidance from the EHRC; trialled online webinars; updated its own guidance and more
- The role of Local Authorities in correcting false information during an election was clarified

Ultimately, and whilst incidents did occur, the election was freer from abuse than in previous cycles.

1.4 Summer 2014 and the second All-Party Inquiry

Following the significant increase in antisemitic incidents in July and August 2014, I commissioned a second major all-party parliamentary report into antisemitism. That comprehensive report, developed over six months was published in February 2015 together with a number of 'sub- reports'. There were 5 key themes:

1. Supporting fellow citizens in words and deeds:

There was an unacceptable rise in antisemitic incidents in July/August 2014. The report focussed on the requirement that non-Jews take a leading role in countering antisemitism and the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement work harder to demonstrate it is not fostering antisemitism. Recommendations were made about improving Police, CPS and Judicial guidance, systems and communications as well as the funding arrangements for security of Jewish communal buildings.

2. A responsible public debate

The report addressed the trend of Holocaust trivialisation and relativisation in relation to discussion of the Middle East conflict. There is a trend in the language being used to discuss the conflict which needs urgent address.

3. Intensifying Interfaith Co-operation

The spikes in tension and incidents related to the Middle East conflict are accompanied by a breakdown in interfaith relations and increased reports of South Asian, North African and Arab perpetrators of antisemitism. A national review of interfaith work was recommended in the report.

4. Modernising the fight against antisemitism:

Social media is a serious and growing concern. Work has been undertaken to engage the industry and there have been important precedents in prosecutions but incident figures indicate a 10-fold

increase in online antisemitism over three years. The report recommended further police resource, guidance for prosecutors, awareness raising about reporting mechanisms and most importantly exploration of the potential for using prevention orders in relation to cyber hate.

5. Celebrating and communicating success:

Over the past 10 years and following the 2006 antisemitism report, there has been considerable success at establishing national frameworks for combatting antisemitism and Britain is a world leader with better data collection, Holocaust education, policing and other systems. This this has not all been well communicated at home or abroad. The report recommended that communications be improved internally and externally through community engagement and a British best practice toolkit – which has subsequently been produced.

1.5 Results of the 2015 All-Party Inquiry

-In late March, the National Police Chief's Council announced that police had reached an agreement to share hate crime data with the Community Security Trust and TELL MAMA (respectively, Jewish and Muslim security and data collection organisations). The agreement enables the routine sharing of anonymous data to increase the shared understanding of the nature and extent of hostility experienced by Muslim and Jewish communities.

-In response to the All-Party Inquiry into Antisemitism, the CST and a campaign by the Jewish Chronicle newspaper, all of which had sought to highlight the risk to synagogues, schools and other potentially vulnerable Jewish community buildings from antisemitic terrorism, Prime Minister David Cameron announced a combined total of £11.9 million funding for Jewish communal security. Increased funding has now been awarded.

-The Crown Prosecution Service has been hugely proactive and an entire action plan has been devised which addresses the improvement of guidance, communication, data handling and more.

-The Government has agreed to report annually to parliament about antisemitism, to a national review of its interfaith work and to creating an international guide about its work on antisemitism.

1.6 The ICCA

From 13-15 March, the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combatting Antisemitism (ICCA) co-hosted a major conference on antisemitism with the German Government. The conference, which was addressed by Chancellor Angela Merkel, built on the success of the London and Ottawa conferences on combatting antisemitism. Parliamentarians from across the globe who work to tackle antisemitism, racism and all other forms of intolerance assembled and three working groups have been established to take forward work inspired by the conference.

1.7 BYC Questions

Antisemitism is a real and growing threat. In 2014 incidents increased dramatically. Online, abuse is increasing exponentially. Despite the wonderful benefits of the internet and technology young people are being exposed on Twitter and elsewhere on an incredible scale to anti-Jewish tropes, particularly in the guise of discourse about the Middle East. Whilst CST and the excellent True Vision site are excellent reporting centres for victims, we know that many remain silent. Recent events at Oxford University have proven that to be the case.

In our various reports we have set out explicitly what government should do to combat antisemitism. There are of course good practices that we have uncovered in our research and that can be explored. For example in Germany both in football and in informal education tremendous and successful efforts are being made at combatting discrimination. From the football 'ultras' campaigning against racism and taking action to have racist abusers thrown out of their grounds to the groups taking Jews and Muslims on joint panels into schools to expose young people to those of different faiths there is much to learn.

I would be pleased to give oral evidence to the committee together with the group secretary and to arrange to be accompanied by representatives of the Muslim and Jewish communities or others who have been actively involved in the work against antisemitism and other forms of racism. There are a number of points that I would like to raise and expand upon that cannot be covered in a written submission.

I can be contacted by the usual means. The secretary to our All-Party Group, Danny Stone, can be contacted via email: dstone@antisemitism.org.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Mann". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John Mann MP

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism