

## **PLENARY LECTURE “CONTEMPORARY HISTORY”**

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Title: “**The Working Definition of Antisemitism**”

In May, 2016 the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted a *Working Definition of Antisemitism*. This followed the adoption of the *Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion* in October 2013.

In this paper I will explore the dynamic behind the adoptions of these two definitions. This process will include a depiction of the unique structure and context of IHRA, as well as the lengthy course of adoption. I will review some of the obstacles to adoption faced in the process as well as bringing case studies of specific examples that illustrate both why these definitions were seen as necessary, and how they have been applied in particular cases. This will be followed by a look at the spread of the antisemitism definition after adoption, including the discourse of opposition to it. My discussion will also focus on previous attempts to define antisemitism from various perspectives, and issues related to those definitions. Finally, I will also consider future possibilities for further adoption of the antisemitism definition.

### Measure Against Antisemitism

To strongly encourage governments and civil society to adopt the *Working Definition of Antisemitism* for both formal and informal use. This would provide, at the very least, a common understanding or basis of what is meant when antisemitism is discussed. Given the diverse audiences (i.e. governmental, policy, academic, juridical, media, educational etc) that are frequently involved in these discussions, it is vital that there be as much clarity as possible on what is meant when antisemitism is referred to.

