



MEMBER MOTION

Section 5.4.4(b) of Procedure By-law

Meeting:	Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date:	February 21, 2024
Subject/Title:	Urging that a Second National Summit to Combat Antisemitism be Convened
Submitted by:	Councillor Karen Cilevitz

Whereas data from Statistics Canada and Jewish organizations such as the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre and B'nai Brith indicate a shocking rise in antisemitic incidents across Canada over the past years;

Whereas there has been a global surge in antisemitism since last October's terrorist attack by Hamas that led to the brutal murder of 1200 Israelis and to which Canada has not been immune;

Whereas since October 2023, Canada's Jewish community has witnessed shots fired at its schools, arson attempts at its communal buildings, boycott efforts and vandalism targeting private businesses simply because their owners are Jewish and the intimidation of its students at universities;

Whereas a first national summit to combat antisemitism was convened by then Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, the Honourable Irwin Cotler, in July 2021 in the wake of the war with Hamas in May of that year, alerting Canadians to a spiraling number of hate incidents including violent attacks on Jews in Toronto and Montreal;

Whereas that first summit led to Canada forming a high-level delegation headed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that made robust promises to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) Conference in October 2021 on how Canada could better confront hate aimed at Jews;

Whereas police departments across the country all report major and unprecedented increases in hate crimes since October 2023 with the Jewish community being by far the most targeted;

Whereas Marvin Rotrand, the outgoing National Director of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights, has called on the provincial legislatures to adopt resolutions urging the convening of a second national summit;

Whereas the Government of Canada has appointed Deborah Lyons, Canada's former Ambassador to Israel, as the new Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism;

Whereas the authority vested in the Special Envoy's office permits her to be uniquely placed to convene and chair such a second summit; and

Whereas a second national summit to combat antisemitism would provide a valuable forum for stakeholders representing all levels of government, civil servants, law enforcements, educators and community leaders to share information and agree on effective strategies to blunt the unprecedented wave of hate aimed at Jews;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved:

That Richmond Hill City Council urge the Government of Canada to mandate the Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism to convene a second national summit to combat antisemitism;

That this Council invite the Government of Canada to ensure the necessary funding and resources are in place to support such a second national summit; and

That a copy of this motion be sent to the leaders of all parties represented in the Parliament of Canada.

Moved by: Councillor Karen Cilevitz

Seconded by: Mayor David West