The fight against antisemitism is a fight for Europe's core values

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With antisemitism worryingly on the rise in Europe and beyond, the European Union is beginning to implement the first ever EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life. EU regions and cities have a crucial role in protecting and promoting Jewish cultural heritage as a vital part of Europe's culture and way of life.

Presenting the European Committee of the Regions' opinion at the plenary session last week, rapporteur János Adam Karácsony (HU/ECR) underlined that the fight against antisemitism is about safeguarding and demonstrating European core values. The Vice-President of the Pest Megye County Council welcomed that the EU strategy "includes a reference to the much-needed support for local and regional authorities to safeguard Jewish heritage and raise awareness of local Jewish culture and traditions" and suggested, for instance, that an action plan could be developed to revitalise Jewish quarters in European cities.

The opinion highlights the importance of education in preserving memory of Holocaust, dismantling prejudices against Jews and raising awareness of Jewish culture and history. "The purpose of combatting antisemitism is not just protection of Jewish community but the community of all European nations whose foundation is a commitment to shared values", Mr Karácsony concluded.

"Antisemitism is a poison to society, a threat to our EU values and everything that the EU stands for. If we fail to ensure future for Jews in Europe, European project will have failed", stressed Katharina von Schnurbein, the European Commission Coordinator on combating antisemitism. She regretted that security concerns have led to Jews leaving some European countries and pointed out that "if the actions at EU level don't trigger down to cities and regions, little will change for the Jewish community".

Ms von Schnurbein warned against increasing antisemitic hate speech and conspiracy theories online and welcomed that the Czech EU

Council Presidency will address the topic in a specific conference in November. She also accused Russia for using the Holocaust and false claims of denazification to justify the brutal invasion of Ukraine.

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