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European Council applauded for backing declaration fighting antisemitism

Jewish groups around the world welcome news "following a difficult year for European Jewry", including a wave of nationalism, populism and extremism

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An orthodox Jew and a boy pass two police officers in France

Jewish groups around the world have applauded the European Council's commitment to fight antisemitism, as a wave of nationalism, populism and extremism sweeps across the continent.

Reaction followed news on Thursday that the Council had unanimously adopted a declaration on the fight against antisemitism and the development of a common security approach to better protect Jewish communities and institutions.

Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt of the Conference of European Rabbis was among those to welcome the vote "following a difficult year for European Jewry".

He said: "This declaration is a significant milestone and shows that Europe is united in wanting to fight antisemitism in all its forms. It is the many divisions in our society that have caused the rise of extreme politics and increased levels of antisemitism and racism."

He added: "Decision makers and influencers across Europe need to work together to ensure that faith communities are properly protected."

The American Jewish Committee (AJC) also praised the vote as "the first time the Council's 28 member states have passed a comprehensive measure aimed at mobilising to counter antisemitism and to assure the safety of European Jews".

Daniel Schwammenthal, director of the AJC Transatlantic Institute, said it represented "unequivocal recognition of the severity of continuing threats to Jews".

The Council's declaration commits member states "to adopt and implement a holistic strategy to prevent and fight all forms of antisemitism" and expresses the EU's determination to "ensure a future for Jewish people to live with the same sense of security and freedom as all other citizens in the EU".

It also calls on member states "to increase their efforts to ensure security of Jewish communities, institutions, and citizens," including providing the financial support for "necessary security measures".

The vote comes two weeks after a major conference on antisemitism in Vienna and ahead of the anticipated release on Monday of the Fundamental Rights Agency survey of European Jewish communities.

<https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/european-council-applauded-for-backing-declaration-fighting-antisemitism/>

