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Dr Moshe Kantor
President of the European Jewish Congress
European Jewish Congress
73 rue de Namur
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Dear Moshe,

Thank you for your letter of 17 of February on how best to combat the rise in anti-Semitism, racism and extremism in Europe following the "Fourth International Let My people Live!" Forum held in Prague. This event marked the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January 2015 and put the emphasis on a matter that concerns us all.

This year's Holocaust commemorations and the Forum took place in a sobering context in light of the recent tragic events in Brussels, Paris and Copenhagen where Jewish communities in Europe were again attacked seventy years after the Holocaust.

Terrorism is a global and European threat and the recent attacks in Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia demonstrate that no country can ignore the risks of violent extremism.

We are facing a kind of terrorism which has no boundaries, and has indeed found fertile ground in the very heart of Europe. The universal values of freedom, dignity and respect are being questioned. Jewish communities are threatened, and for the first time in decades, there are those who feel compelled to leave their country to find shelter elsewhere – echoes of times we thought we left behind us forever. Behind the attacks there is a crescendo of violence of thought, anti-Semitism and a new language for followers of an ancient hatred.

Important as they are, convictions and statements of solidarity are not enough: there is a common destiny that binds all European citizens. The EU is working inside and outside its borders towards fighting radicalism and terrorism. Our values cannot be compromised. That is the reason why we focus on the inter-religious dialogue, the fight against anti-Semitic propaganda involving schools, universities and local communities: it is to the new generations that our common destiny is entrusted.

Concrete initiatives to be implemented in the course of 2015 were agreed by the Council of 9 February 2015 (in its conclusions on Counter-terrorism) and confirmed by the Informal European

Council on 12 February 2015 (with its statement on Counter-terrorism). The main focus of the EU's and Member State efforts will be on ensuring the security of citizens, preventing radicalisation, safeguarding values and cooperating with international partners.

Enhancing EU internal security is inseparable from coordinated external engagement and enhanced dialogue, in particular in the Mediterranean, the Middle East, including Yemen and North Africa, in particular Libya, and the Sahel.

The EU is working to further enhance its multilateral engagement, including in the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF). I participated in the recent Summit on countering violent extremism (CVE), radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism in Washington D.C. on 19 February 2015 highlighting the role of prevention and education in dealing with the root causes and consequences of violent extremism.

In addition to the work conducted by the Commission to step up its fight against anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia through legislation, financial support and the fostering of dialogue, I would like to mention the joint EU/Israel annual seminar on racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, the latest of which was held in Jerusalem in October 2014. This dialogue is essential for fostering our common values and helps us remain vigilant with regard to developments and concerns on the ground. In addition to this, the EU recently co-sponsored the first-ever discussion in the General Assembly on the rise of anti-Semitism worldwide, which took place in New-York on 22 January 2015.

I highly appreciate the work by the European Jewish Congress and I will take up the matter of combatting anti-Semitism, racism and extremism with Vice-President Frans Timmermans who is already working on concrete initiatives.

Europe is founded on the respect for freedom of religion, on the passion for dialogue and openness to the world. These are our core values. They are not only our past, they are our future.

Yours sincerely,



Federica Mogherini