

IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)  
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## Focus on anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred at European Commission's Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights

First European Union (EU) Vice President/Commissioner for Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, Frans Timmermans, in cooperation with EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Věra Jourová, are hosting the first Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights this week, which this year focuses on anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred.

The focus of the Colloquium comes after a couple of years in which anti-Semitic incidents rose, culminating in fatal terrorist attacks in several European Union countries, as well as years of increasing anti-Muslim hatred in the form of verbal and physical violence against Muslims.

The Colloquium aims to bring together legislators, civil servants, civil society and representatives of both communities to look at trends and underlying reasons for increasing anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim incidents. The Colloquium aims to put concrete recommendations for projects, policies and legislation designed to combat hate crime, hate speech and discrimination against Jews and Muslims.

Soraya Post, Co-President of ARDI, said *"I am pleased that the European Commission has decided to dedicate a high level meeting to the fight against racism. The terrible incidents of anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred we have seen during the last year clearly shows that the fight against racism is one of the most pressing issues that the EU needs to deal with at the moment. Our success will be decisive in order to maintain a society that is based on democracy and human rights."*

Cecilia Wikstrom, member of ARDI, commented *"In the past year we have witnessed terrible terrorist attacks against Jews and Jewish sites in Brussels, Paris and Copenhagen in addition to the casual anti-Semitic hatred many Jews face every day. Anti-Semitism is a threat to all of us, Jews and non-Jews, and I welcome this initiative by the European Commission to look at how to combat it."*

Sajjad Karim, Vice-President of ARDI and Chair of ARDI's Islamophobia Working Group, concluded *"It is imperative that more is done to tackle Islamophobia. Many people across Europe have been victims of verbal and physical abuse and therefore I am glad that the European Commission has included Islamophobia as one of the focuses of this year's Colloquium."*