



COMBATING ANTISEMITISM FOSTERING JEWISH life



Message by European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas on the occasion of Rosh HaShanah

To all Jews in the European Union and around the world preparing to celebrate the New Year 5784, I send my warmest wishes for a healthy and peaceful year, filled with rekindled hope. L'Shanah Tovah U'Metukah!

Festivals such as Rosh HaShanah serve as guideposts in our lives to count our blessings, collect strength for difficult times and learn from mistakes. It is a time of renewal, and in the Jewish spirit we are all called to transform our lives, our homes and our nations. It is time to reunite and gain inspiration from each other and from past experiences, looking into how to ensure a safe and better future.

As Europeans, we are proud of our values of equality, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination, and of what the EU project means – lasting peace and security, where rule of law is enforced, and the rights of all citizens are upheld. I am pleased to see progress in the fight against the scourge of antisemitism through the implementation of the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life. In its two years of application, out of 100 initiatives included in our EU Strategy almost 70 have been put in motion and many strategies at the national level have been adopted. This is the result of united efforts and successful cooperation with Member States, Jewish communities and civil society organisations. It is also the result of reinforced coordination with our international partners. My visit to Israel in June, our stepped-up transatlantic cooperation, and revamped efforts in the context of the United Nations give me hope that the fight against antisemitism is receiving increased attention globally.

We are determined to work towards a Europe free from antisemitism, both in the digital and physical realm, where victory over discrimination, prejudice and conflict, opens new perspectives and ways to celebrate Jewish life, in accordance with its culture and traditions. A society where people can speak and worship freely. A Europe that honours its past, speaks truth to history and preserves the memory of the Shoah in a dignified manner.

As one of the many initiatives of the EU Strategy, we will develop a 'European Network where the Holocaust Happened' connecting sites across Europe and promoting a model of local ownership and interconnectedness between the physical site and all online available relevant information to show that Shoah happened locally and educate about it. We will also build a Europe-wide Network of trusted flaggers and fact checkers, to identify antisemitic hate speech online, report it and develop counter narratives.

Rosh HaShanah is also the 'head' of the new year, not only the beginning. It gives direction to each and every day of the entire year. Therefore, we are determined to strengthen our forces in fighting antisemitism, to bring about change where prejudices overshadow our view, and stand with the Jews in Europe, each and every day of the new year.

I would like to wish you all, on behalf of the European Commission, a joyful and sweet New Year!