

Report by Alan Schneider

B'nai B'rith World Center Director Alan Schneider and Board of Governors member Paolo Foa represented B'nai B'rith International at the recent meeting of the 14th World Jewish Congress Plenary Assembly, held in Budapest, Hungary. The gathering of 500 delegates and guests representing Jewish communities and organizations in more than 70 countries worldwide, was held under unprecedented security and exhibited support for the approximately 100,000 Jews living in Hungary today who are threatened by growing blatant anti-Semitism.



Left to right : Gábor Bajor, Magda Vadász, Alan Schneider, János Bolgár, Sára Sugár, Viktor Hajòs

Magda Vadász, President of the Budapest Lodge, Viktor Hajòs , former President of the Budapest Lodge and Mentor, Gábor Bajor, János Bolgár are members of the Board of the Budapest Lodge Sára Sugár

The gathering was addressed by Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orbán, who said that “anti-Semitism today in Hungary is unacceptable, and we will show zero tolerance in regards to it.” Introducing Orbán, Ronald Lauder called on Hungary and the government to do more against growing anti-Semitism, notably coming from the extreme-right Jobbik party.

Representing the government of Israel, Minister Silvan Shalom urged Orbán, in his presence, to support the proposal to add Hezbollah to the EU's list of terror groups. Jewish community President Péter Feldmájér said in his speech: “I believe that the Jews of the world must unite their forces. This day also shows us that we are not alone; we are all listening to each other no matter where we may be living across the globe. The task we have is no little one to handle.” Germany's Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle said in his keynote address: “Anti-Semitism has no place, neither in Berlin, nor in Budapest, nor anywhere else in Europe or in the world...We are firmly committed to protecting and nourishing Jewish life in our societies and to countering anti-Semitism across the globe. We have to tackle the root causes of anti-Semitism.”

NEWS : B'nai B'rith Attends 14th World Jewish Congress Plenary Assembly in Budapest

Written by B'nai B'rith Europe

The Plenary Assembly also discussed effective ways to combat the rise of neo-Nazi parties in Europe and adopted a resolution which called on Hungary “to recognize that Jobbik and its subsidiaries ‘pose a fundamental threat to Hungary’s democracy’ and that ‘decisive action...must now be taken to take effective measures, including by enacting and enforcing legislation for the protection of all citizens and residents of this country, in particular, vulnerable minorities such as the Roma and the Jews, against threats of violence, racist hate and insults, and the denial of the Holocaust.’”

The WJC also urged national leaders and legislators in Europe to join the 125 legislators from more than 40 countries in signing the London Declaration on Combating Anti-Semitism. In another resolution, the delegates urged the international community to recognize the legitimate rights of Jewish refugees in the Middle East who were forced to flee their countries after 1948.