

9th Seminar on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Antisemitism

The 9th EU-Israel Seminar on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Antisemitism which took place in Brussels on December 16th – 17th 2015 brought together about 30 representatives from the Foreign Ministry of Israel, the European Commission, the External Action Service and the Fundamental Rights Agency as well as technology experts and NGOs.

The EU and Israel agreed to continue to work closely together in combatting Antisemitism, in particular through tackling hate speech online by exchanging experience in the field of technology and best practices.

In her opening statement Commissioner Vera Jourova said: *"The European Commission is extremely concerned about the rise of anti-Semitism and a general increase of hatred-based violence. I am happy that today we come together to look for common solutions for an extremely worrying phenomenon. We are focusing on what unites us: the fight against racism, against xenophobia, and in particular against antisemitism."*

"The recent terrorist attacks in Europe confirm the need for a comprehensive EU response to terrorism and security threats, taking account of all available tools. We must address the root causes of terrorism and of extremism. And this starts with prevention. We are working to ensure that the EU response to extremism does not lead to the stigmatisation of any one group or community."

Ambassador Yuval ROTEM, Senior Deputy Director General, Head of Public Diplomacy Directorate at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs said: *"We must understand, political leaders and lay leaders alike, that our rhetoric and the words we say, or neglect to say, have meaning. Silence in the face of hatred is meaningful; muteness in face of anti-Semitism is dangerous. We must rise to the occasion of condemning manifestations of hatred and appearances of anti-Semitism, wherever and whenever they appear, and against whoever reveals them. I therefore welcome the occasion of the EU's engagement in tackling the issue."*