

We, the undersigned Jewish organizations, write with deep concern about the response to the election of Zohran Mamdani as Mayor of New York City by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and other Jewish organizations and leaders.

We understand the anxiety felt by many Jewish New Yorkers. And we share a commitment to fighting antisemitism and ensuring the safety and security of Jewish communities across America.

That commitment must not be clouded, however, by hypocrisy and an eagerness to only assail one side of the political spectrum.

A prime example of our concern is the approach that the ADL has taken to New York City's Mayor-elect. We are profoundly disappointed by the decision to launch a "Mamdani Monitor," establish a dedicated tip line, and adopt rhetoric describing a democratically elected mayor as a "clear and present danger" before he has even taken office. **This approach to Mayor-elect Mamdani is disingenuous, counterproductive, and ultimately harmful to the cause of addressing antisemitism.**

Our concern extends well beyond the ADL to a broader tendency taking hold in our community — to treat disagreement as danger and an existential crisis and to respond to fears by lashing out rather than engaging in constructive dialogue.

We have watched antisemitic incidents reach record levels. We have seen synagogues vandalized, Jewish students harassed, and visibly Jewish neighbors attacked on the streets of American cities. We have heard conspiracy theories about Jewish power spoken aloud in ways that would have been unthinkable a generation ago. We have held our children closer and wondered what kind of future awaits them.

This is not imagined. This is not exaggerated. American Jews are afraid, and we have reason to be.

**But the fight against antisemitism requires building relationships, not burning bridges.**

For generations, Jewish communal organizations have understood that our safety depends on our ability to work constructively with those in power—including those with whom we disagree. **Announcing an adversarial campaign against an incoming mayor before he has taken office is not advocacy; it is alienation.** It forecloses the possibility of engagement and ensures that Jewish voices will be marginalized rather than heard.

We must also maintain the crucial distinction between antisemitism and political disagreement. Mayor-elect Mamdani has been a vocal critic of Israeli government policies. Some of his rhetoric has caused confusion and discord within our community. But criticism of Israel—even sharp criticism, even criticism some of us may find unfair—is not inherently antisemitic. **Conflating criticism of Israel with antisemitism does a disservice to the essential work of identifying and combating actual Jew-hatred.** It dilutes a term that must retain its moral clarity. And it alienates potential allies who share our concern about antisemitism but hold different views on Israeli policy.

Our credibility in fighting antisemitism depends on our ability to make this distinction honestly.

And we must remain focused on what truly threatens us. White supremacist movements espouse eliminationist antisemitism. Violent attacks continue against our communities. Conspiracy theories about Jewish control circulate in mainstream discourse. These are the forces that endanger Jewish lives. These are the threats that demand our attention, our resources, and our fiercest advocacy.

We do not write this letter to endorse Mayor-elect Mamdani or his positions. We write it as a call to our own community: do not let fear be our North Star.

We have just finished celebrating Hanukkah. For eight nights, we kindled flames in our windows—not hidden away, but displayed for all to see. This is what our tradition teaches: that we do not cower in darkness, but neither do we rage against it. We simply add light.

We must fight antisemitism wherever it shows up. We must fight it fiercely. But we must fight it wisely, strategically, and in a manner worthy of the light we have carried for three thousand years.

*Signed,*

New Jewish Narrative

T'Ruah

Partners For Progressive Israel

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