Resolution on Anti-Semitic and Anti-Jewish Prejudice

Adopted by the APA Council of Representatives August 2005/Amended August 2007

WHEREAS prejudice and discrimination based on religion have caused untold human suffering throughout recorded history; and

WHEREAS anti-Jewish hostility, usually called anti-Semitism, has taken various forms over the centuries and has been perpetrated by many groups throughout history (Allswang, 1985); and

WHEREAS the intense prejudice, discrimination and hatred that grew out of long-standing anti-Semitism led to the Holocaust, perpetrated in Europe by the Nazis in the 1940s, which eventuated in the brutal annihilation of six million Jews (Charney, 2000); and

WHEREAS anti-Semitic acts of violence in the United States are increasing alarmingly, with 1,821 reported in 2004, the highest level in nine years and an increase of 17% over the number reported in 2003 (Anti-Defamation League, 2005); and

WHEREAS "The increasing frequency and severity of anti-Semitic incidents since the start of the 21st century, particularly in Europe, has compelled the international community to focus on anti-Semitism with renewed vigor" (U.S. Department of State, 2004); and

WHEREAS the United States Congress has approved the Global Anti-Semitism Awareness/Review Act, which acknowledges a disturbing increase in anti-Semitism and establishes an office in the State Department to monitor and combat anti-Semitism worldwide (U.S. Department of State, 2004); and

WHEREAS the 2005 Survey of American Attitudes Towards Jews in America by the Anti-Defamation League found that 14% of Americans or nearly 35 million adults, hold views about Jews that are "unquestionably anti-Semitic" (Anti-Defamation League, 2005); and

WHEREAS much anti-Semitism today takes the form of "modern" or “new” anti-Semitism, in which actual bias against Jews is denied while prejudiced attitudes exist and discriminatory statements or acts are engaged in (Anti-Semitism Worldwide, 2004); and

WHEREAS this form of anti-Semitism may be more difficult for its perpetrators to identify and challenge, as their beliefs about themselves may be that they are not biased against Jews (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986); and

WHEREAS this form of anti-Semitism may be asserted in the context of discourse regarding the actions of the Government of Israel, thus further disguising the anti-Semitic nature of the discourse (Anti-Semitism Worldwide, 2004); and

WHEREAS the link between extreme anti-Israel rhetoric and deeds directed against Jewish individuals and communities has become an observable global trend and has at times unleashed demonization and dehumanization of Jews; (Anti-Semitism Worldwide, 2004); and

WHEREAS every anti-Semitic act creates a climate of fear, anxiety and insecurity, both for the individual and the community; as such therefore, Jews are exposed to suffering the feelings of vulnerability, anger, depression and other sequelae of victimization (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Valent, 2002); and

WHEREAS anti-Semitic acts also harm the perpetrators by desensitizing them to violence, and raise concerns about their generalizing such acts to other groups (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Ezequiel, 1995, 2002; Staub, 1990, 2005); and

WHEREAS the American Psychological Association has recognized the profound psychological consequences of hate crimes motivated by prejudice (APA Council of Representatives, 2005); and

WHEREAS the American Psychological Association opposes prejudice and discrimination based upon race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or physical condition (American Psychological Association, 2002); and

WHEREAS as psychologists we respect the dignity and worth of all people and are committed to improving the condition of individuals, organizations, and society, we are aware of and respect cultural, individual, and role differences among individuals, including (but not limited to) those based on ethnicity, national origin, and religion (American Psychological Association, 2002); and

WHEREAS psychologists recognize and protect civil and human rights and strive to help the public develop informed judgments and choices concerning human behavior:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Psychological Association condemns all anti-Semitic attitudes and actions, both overt and covert, and will use its influence to promote fairness, respect, and dignity for all people, regardless of religion or ethnicity, in all arenas in which psychologists work and practice, and in society at large.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the American Psychological Association will take a leadership role in opposing anti-Semitism.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the American Psychological Association encourages all psychologists to act to eliminate all discrimination of an anti-Semitic nature.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the American Psychological Association encourages research to better understand the characteristics, causes, and consequences of both overt and covert anti-Semitic and Anti-Jewish prejudice.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the American Psychological Association will include appropriate information on anti-Semitism in its multicultural and diversity training material and activities, and that diversity and multicultural efforts will take cognizance of anti-Semitism, whether subtle or not, and will attempt to overcome it.

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