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**RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND ALL FORMS OF
DISCRIMINATION**

Joint written statement* submitted by the Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations (CBJO), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status and B'nai B'rith, a non-governmental organization on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 February 2005]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Once again, the world is witnessing a rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and the Middle East, facilitated by modern information technology. It is not only the citizens of Middle East countries who watch *Al-Manar's* anti-Semitic programming, but also people in Europe and North and South America. This hatred takes its cue from the venom spread by the Nazi regime into the Middle East during the Second World War. Today, it is allowed to fester under the guise of political commentary and opposition to the policies of the State of Israel.

Airing a 40-part series of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and publishing cartoons and columns advancing the blood libel serve only to marginalize the Jewish people and undermine their basic human rights. Indeed, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in its Berlin Declaration acknowledged that political criticism of Israel at times may cross the line into anti-Semitism – especially when this criticism seeks to undermine the legitimacy of the Jewish State.

It has become popular in certain political and intellectual circles to distinguish between “anti-Semitism,” which is generally condemned, and anti-Zionism, which is condoned, if not applauded. While the former seeks to deny the Jewish people their basic human rights, the latter seeks to deny them the right to self-determination. Last November the Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related forms of Intolerance and UNESCO convened a panel of experts in Barcelona to provide advice on anti-Semitism, Christianophobia and Islamophobia. Unfortunately, most of the panelists invited on account of their alleged expertise in anti-Semitism had a record of undermining the Jewish people’s basic human right to self-determination and religious freedom, let alone to free assembly. In their recommendations, the panel suggested that Jewish leaders distinguish between defense of the State of Israel and the fight against anti-Semitism. Only by withdrawing their solidarity with the State of Israel, these experts concluded, could anti-Semitism be defeated.

Denying the Jewish people their basic human rights, including the right to self-determination, *is* anti-Semitism. This basic right is fulfilled by the existence of the State of Israel. It is protected and advanced by the political movement to guarantee Jewish self-determination – Zionism. Zionism is about the Jewish people, and does not compete with any other people’s basic human right of self-determination. As anti-Zionism seeks to undermine this basic right of the Jewish, it is anti-Semitic. When anti-Israel rhetoric, advocacy or activity crosses the line beyond which it seeks to undermine the legitimacy of the Jewish State, it is anti-Semitic. There is no government whose policies are not legitimately criticized, but when this criticism aims to dismantle that country, it ceases to be legitimate. Disagreeing with French policies does not lead critics to the conclusion that France as a county is illegitimate, or that France should be disbanded. The same respect should be afforded to the State of Israel.

Sixty years after the end of World War II and the Holocaust, it is not only anti-Semitism that the international community has allowed to re-surface, but mass murder, ethnic cleansing and genocide. Today we witness once again attempts by governments and government officials to discriminate against, isolate, and eliminate an entire population from its native roots. In Darfur, crimes against humanity continue to be perpetrated against the native population based solely upon ethnic lines. This is the third time in fifteen years that the international community has failed to act in the face of ethnic cleansing – Bosnia, Rwanda, and now Darfur.

Today, at least 70,000 individuals murdered in Darfur and over one million displaced only due to their ethnic background are suffering a similar fate, albeit on a less industrial scale than the fate

of European Jewry during World War II. The international community has an obligation to end the expulsion, rape and mass murder of the people in Darfur. The Darfurian people have been targeted simply due to their ethnic African background. The UN commission of Inquiry has stated that government officials have acted with genocidal intent in their attacks in Darfur. While the Sudanese government has not adopted a plan of genocide, the UN Commission concluded that it is responsible for atrocities and crimes against humanity that are no less severe. The Sudanese government and government officials, as well as the Janjaweed rebels, have used various methods in their ethnic cleansing regime designed to end the Darfurian ethnic community,,: murder, rape and induced famine caused by displacement and the disruption of economic cycles.

The UN's World Food Program fed 1.5 million people in Darfur in December 2004, and it estimates that it will have to feed at least 2.7 million people per month in 2005. This economic attack on Darfur has a permanent aspect to it, with the government cutting down crop-producing acacia and mango trees. Eradication of agriculture, whether subsistence farming or export producing, means that farmers and their families have no reason to return should the situation stabilize.

It was precisely for the purposes of protecting people like those in Rwanda in the past and now in Darfur that the United Nations and the Commission on Human Rights was created. These bodies must not allow the ideal of consensus to prevent it from acting. CHR member countries should override the objections of the Sudanese government and pass a resolution upholding the basic human rights of the Darfurian people, by a vote if necessary. The world failed to act 60 years ago in the face of another regime that sought to eradicate a people based upon their ethnic and religious background. It failed in the 1990s during the Rwandan genocide. Today, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights must make a clear, decisive statement on behalf of the Darfurian people.
