

Personal Representatives condemn anti-Semitic comments by Russian Foreign Minister

VIENNA, 5 May 2022 – Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, Associate Professor Dr. Regina Polak, Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions and Mehmet Paçacı, Personal Representative on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims made the following statement:

“Nearly two decades have passed since the OSCE organized its first conferences on combating anti-Semitism, which resulted in the 2004 Berlin Declaration, endorsed by all participating States. Among the many measures to address this growing problem was the expressed commitment to promote remembrance and education about the tragedy of the Holocaust. It is a continuing, uphill struggle, but most OSCE participating States are making good faith efforts to address it.

Thus, it is shocking and distressing that Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov, would draw on one of the most sinister anti-Semitic myths in his efforts to discredit the President of Ukraine and his government. We had hoped the distorted notion that Jews are responsible for their own misfortune and that they were the architects of the Holocaust itself, was relegated to the darkest corners of society. But Mr. Lavrov has now brought international attention and new life to this anti-Semitic falsehood.

As the Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, devoted to promoting tolerance and combating discrimination, we know the importance of education and the challenge of confronting difficult historical truths. We forthrightly condemn this latest effort to upend the very facts of the Holocaust and revive a disgraceful anti-Semitic trope and all for the purpose of promoting the Russian aggression against Ukraine.”

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit: <https://www.osce.org/tolerance-and-nondiscrimination/517479>