

## Sarajevo Declaration



MJLC Board members meet in mufti of Sarajevo office. Mufti Nedžad Grabus, rabbi Schlomo Hofemeister, imam Yahya Pallavicini, imam Tarafa Baghajati

Over the past four days in Sarajevo the MJLC has brought young Jewish and Muslim leaders from across Europe to embark on a yearlong journey of shared learning as part of the MJLC’s Ambassadors Programme, this has included two days of training, visits to religious sites, a commemoration trip to Srebrenica to honour the 8,372 victims of the Srebrenica Genocide, and a launch event to publicly express solidarity and celebrate our new MJLC Ambassadors. In the spirit of dialogue and drawing on the lessons we have learned from Sarajevo about Bosnia’s long history of religion, conflict, and coexistence we feel the need to speak out again.

In October we as Muslim and Jewish leaders came together in Sevilla to address the pressing issue of continued Muslim-Jewish cooperation across Europe at this difficult time and to condemn violence against civilians and violations of international law. Seven months later the conflict has only escalated and we as a Muslim-Jewish coalition from across Europe are compelled and committed to continue working together.



Rabbi Schudrich in Srebrenica with MJLC mentors and ambassadors

SARAJEVO DECLARATION



Imam Yahya Pallavicini with MJLC delegation in Srebrenica

The ongoing conflict has seen a rise in unacceptable theological misinterpretations from extremists encouraging violence against the communities of the other faith. We can not help but liken this to the shared story of Cain and Abel from our sacred texts, a tragic tale of brother killing brother. We condemn this clear abuse of Jewish and Muslim religious values in the strongest possible terms, there is no religious justification for the killing of innocents. We reiterate that we cannot allow this conflict to sow divisions in Europe.



Rabbi Souiza with MJLC ambassadors in Sarajevo synagogue

We are called by God to protect the sanctity of human life. We pray for peace, freedom from terrorism and dignity for all citizens and believers. We must rediscover and embody the sacred values of inclusive citizenship, kinship and hospitality, which are also European values, instead of arrogance and war.

We condemn Muslim hate speech and physical attacks against Jewish communities in Europe. We note with growing concern the increasing levels of anti-Muslim and antisemitic hatred by opportunistic politicians for political gain leading into the upcoming European elections, failing in their responsibility to respect freedom of religion and belief while encouraging hatred between Jewish and Muslim communities.



Sarajevo Gazi Husrev Beg mosque. MJLC delegation from Austria, Italy, Portugal and Bosnia

We call on our leaders to redouble their efforts to work to preserve and strengthen the freedom of expression, knowledge and belief which are vital to functioning democracies. Education must not be politicised and must be opened to all including at European Universities.

We intend for this declaration to clearly demonstrate that as Jews and as Muslims we are also proud citizens of Europe and despite this difficult moment, we draw on the strong history of mutual respect and collaboration that our communities have shared for centuries. We have seen this strongly in Sarajevo and are reminded of examples from all across Europe. We invite you to continue with us in preserving and strengthening this legacy of cooperation. The graves at Srebrenica remind us of what the alternative is.