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Michael Sheetz, President

The Honorable Bob Menendez  
Chairperson  
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
528 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James E. Risch  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
483 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

February 7, 2022

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch,

I write to you today to once again express the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL's) strong support for Dr. Deborah Lipstadt to serve as the next U.S. Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combatting Anti-Semitism with the rank of Ambassador. Dr. Lipstadt is one of the world's foremost experts of antisemitism, having written several acclaimed books and given numerous lectures on the subject.

Today we are experiencing a crisis of rising antisemitism, both at home and around the world, with those promoting antisemitism and inciting hateful and violent action speaking across borders and with anti-Jewish conspiracies appearing and building across the globe. In just the past few weeks we have seen violent assaults against Jews in the streets of London, Brooklyn, and Colleyville, and it is clear that antisemitism remains a serious and potentially lethal threat. We have also seen an intensifying of anti-Israel and anti-Zionist rhetoric across the world, which, as we saw this past May, can result in violent attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions. Moreover, ADL's data shows that antisemitic incidents are at a historic high—three of the last four years have seen the highest number of antisemitic incidents on record since ADL's Center on Extremism began tracking this information in 1979. U.S. leadership is an essential part of the answer.

ADL has long viewed Dr. Lipstadt's confirmation as a key policy priority for the organization. The State Department's U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism is a critical element of America's role in the fight against antisemitism around the world. The office needs a confirmed ambassador, greater funding, and more regular staffing levels.

To that end, since Dr. Lipstadt's nomination, ADL has undertaken the following:

- From the day that Dr. Lipstadt was nominated in July 2021, ADL publicly welcomed her nomination and supported Dr. Lipstadt's candidacy through our CEO [Jonathan Greenblatt's](#) and our [organization's](#) voice. We have done this consistently over the past 27 weeks.

- ADL and ADL volunteer leadership authored op-eds in support of Dr. Lipstadt, both in [national papers](#) and in key [states around the country](#), urging the process to move forward.
- More than 5,000 ADL lay leaders have generated more than 11,000 contacts to their Senators and met with 35 Senate offices in support of Dr. Lipstadt's rapid confirmation.
- On April 14, 2021, ADL authored a [report](#) for the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom on antisemitism in Europe and ways the U.S. can best combat it, which included in it a section on the importance of the Special Envoy's office being filled and empowered.
- On May 21, 2021, ADL and other Jewish groups [wrote](#) to President Biden urging several steps to confront a spike in antisemitism, including urging him to nominate an envoy in a timely manner.
- On November 4, 2021, ADL, along with the Jewish Federations of North America and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, sent a [letter](#) to both of your offices where we expressed that "The global Jewish community needs the United States to be a leader in the fight against antisemitism and we must not waste more time leaving our lead official in this fight off the field."
- On November 11, 2021, ADL, along with representatives from 20 other Jewish organizations, sent a [letter](#) to your offices urging, "you to swiftly fill the position of US Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism by considering the current nominee."
- On December 10, 2021, ADL along with several other organizations, gathered [all four former Special Envoys](#), for the first time, for a conversation about the importance of the office and used the subsequent coverage to raise the issue.
- On February 7, 2022, ADL joined an Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance (IJMA) [letter](#) to support Dr. Lipstadt's nomination as Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism.
- ADL played a leading role in the very broad coalition of Jewish American groups that led to Congress passing the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism Act at the end of December 2020 that then-President Trump signed into law in January 2021, which elevated the Special Envoy to the rank of Ambassador, reporting directly to the Secretary of State and enabling sufficient seniority and access inside the U.S. government and when engaging foreign governments.
- ADL has advocated consistently to increase the envoy's budget, which helped persuade Congress to double the budget in FY2021 to \$1M, the most ever appropriated for the Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism.

What starts with attacks on Jews does not end with Jews; antisemitism, conspiracies, and scapegoating can mutate to threaten the security of other communities as well as the foundations of a pluralistic democracy—where antisemitism flourishes, no group is safe.

Time and again in recent years, ADL has had to respond to those who use analogies to the Holocaust or Nazi Germany in wholly inapt comparisons. This includes politicians and individuals engaged in all kinds of political debates, most recently focused on COVID restrictions, masking requirements, and vaccination efforts.

In light of these challenges, we cannot wait a moment longer to confirm Dr. Deborah Lipstadt as the next U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. Today more than ever, we need her expertise and leadership.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter, and please let me know if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Sevilla', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Max Sevilla  
Vice President, Government Relations, Advocacy & Community Engagement  
Anti-Defamation League