



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies skeptical of Pride Toronto's initiative to exclude expressions of hate from the Pride Parade

Toronto, March 12, 2010 – Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) initially commended the decision on the part of Pride Toronto to ban messages of violence and hatred from the Pride Parade. FSWC remains concerned, however, that a strong and clear statement has yet to be issued by Pride Toronto condemning the participation of anti-Israel hate groups and messages in the parade, and looks forward to an unambiguous response from Pride Toronto that the events of last year, including the incitement to hatred against Jews and the mislabeling of Israel as an apartheid state, will not be accepted at future Pride events.

“FSWC initially made a concerted positive overture this week by commending Pride for speaking out against discrimination. However, during the course of discussion with Pride executives and board leaders, it has regrettably become apparent that Pride’s “new” policy against discrimination does not include discriminating against Israel and Jews. We very much hope Pride will come out with a statement to this effect and until such time, FSWC will continue raising this matter with the City of Toronto, with sponsors and with the public at large”.

Repeated requests by FSWC for an unambiguous statement regarding the specific hatred directed at the Jewish community, as in last year’s parade, have resulted in similar vague and evasive language. Despite the initiative to focus on the theme “Celebrating 30 Years of Pride in Toronto” it remains to be seen whether or not Jewish gay rights activists will be welcomed at a joyous celebration of gay pride, or intimidated by antisemitic thugs hiding behind the banner of human rights.

For more information on this issue please visit <http://reclaimingourpride.ca/>.

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