



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FRIENDS OF SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES
COMMENDS MAYORAL CANDIDATE'S MOTION TO REVOKE FUNDING
AND SUPPORT FOR 2010 GAY PRIDE PARADE**

Toronto, June 25, 2010 – Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) commends the decision by Toronto mayoral candidates Giorgio Mammoliti and Rob Ford to revoke funding and support for the 2010 Gay Pride parade retroactively due to Pride Toronto's last minute decision to rescind the ban on the phrase "Israeli apartheid."

A motion drawn up by Councillor Mammoliti and seconded by Councillor Ford was circulated at an early morning press conference attended by representatives of the organized Jewish community including FSWC, Kulanu (representing the gay Jewish community), Canadian Jewish Congress, UJA Federation, Canada Israel Committee and Martin Gladstone, a lawyer/activist whose film "Reclaiming Our Pride" details the poisoned atmosphere created by the hate group "Queers against Israeli apartheid" at the 2009 Gay Pride parade.

"We are astonished that Pride Toronto has once again abdicated its leadership role and decided to allow parade participants to decide for themselves if their messages comply with the City of Toronto's anti-discrimination policies. Allowing messages of hate and creating an atmosphere of fear and distrust is in no way in keeping with a joyous celebration of gay rights," said Avi Benlolo, President and CEO of FSWC. "The parade has been hijacked by anti-Israel agitators and is turning into a staging ground for antisemites rather than gay rights," he added.

Pride Toronto had earlier agreed to prohibit the misleading phrase "Israeli apartheid" from the parade, and then changed its position once funding was assured by City Council – leading Councillor Mammoliti to question if this had been Pride's intention all along. Pride now says participating groups are responsible for their own messaging, - a decision Mayoral Candidate Rocco Rossi termed "fig-leaf compliance" at the press conference.

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Contact

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The Press Conference will take place on Friday, June 25, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Room 318, located at 750 Spadina Avenue. The following people/organizations will be in attendance:

- Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies
- Martin Gladstone, Producer, Reclaiming our Pride
- Kulanu – Toronto's only Jewish LGBTQ Group
- Canadian Jewish Congress
- UJA Federation of Greater Toronto
- Canada-Israel Committee

Interested media must register in advance. Proper media accreditation is required and will be checked on-site.

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