

26th January 2022

To the Trustees of JNF (UK)

Samuel Hayek
Gideon Falter
Dr Alan Mendoza
Gary Mond
David Berens
Laurence Julius
Timothy Kendal
Murray Lee
Belinda Oakland
Mandi (Marilyn) Waisman
Howard Wayne

Dear Trustees,

Motion of Censure

On behalf of the Board of Deputies Executive, we are writing to inform you of the results of the vote from the Board of Deputies January Plenary that took place on Sunday January 23, 2022, concerning JNF UK. The motion under discussion was as follows.

“The Board of Deputies hereby censures the Jewish National Fund UK (JNF UK) for failing to disavow the inflammatory and bigoted remarks of its Chair Samuel Hayek.”

Background: (Included by Motion proposers)

1. The Board of Deputies has a longstanding commitment to confront anti Muslim hatred within the Jewish community. In the words of the President of the Board: “As a community that has faced more than our fair share of prejudice, we need to be crystal clear on this and lead the fight to defeat it.” (The Jewish Chronicle 13th June 2018)
2. JNF UK is a member of the Board.
3. During an interview with The Jerusalem Post (2nd December 2021), which was shared on the JNF UK’s website, Samuel Hayek, the longstanding Chair of JNF claimed that Jews “have no future in England”.
4. In a follow-up interview with The Jewish News (22nd December 2021), Hayek offered further explanation arguing that British Jews were threatened by Muslim immigration. He claimed that “In Islam, there is not a term for ‘peace’” and that Muslim immigrants “don’t speak English, they create their own ghettos, their own education, their own process of thinking.”

5. In response, the Board of Deputies President Marie van der Zyl said: “We condemn adverse remarks about Muslim immigration and Muslim communities.” Senior Vice President Gary Mond (*who has since resigned*) made clear he did not agree with Hayek: “I think it is clear that my views on this subject differ profoundly from those expressed in the article.”

6. Hayek’s remarks caused widespread and foreseeable offence within Muslim communities, damaging interfaith relations. These remarks should have no place within mainstream communal discourse.

In accordance with our constitution, the motion was originally discussed in the Communities and Education Division where it was decided by a large majority to forward the resolution to the plenary. The motion was passed after debate at the January plenary by 133 votes to 75.

We note that the Chair of JNF has still not retracted his comments and nor has he apologised for them. It is also regrettable that you as Trustees have not been explicit in your condemnation of his comments. When you are unable to reject explicitly, anti-Muslim bigotry, it undermines attempts to draw attention to, and combat, antisemitism from extremists in the Muslim community. Furthermore, the sweeping statement about the future of Jewish life in the UK is deeply insulting to the many thousands of activists and leaders whose ceaseless work has made our community a beacon of excellence in the Jewish Diaspora.

JNF UK has a proud tradition in our community and its contribution to Israel is well documented. The Board of Deputies look forward to the day when you address seriously the matters raised above.

We will be making this letter available to the public.

Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.



Marie van der Zyl
President