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Second European Commission -Israel Seminar on the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, Jerusalem, 22-23, January.

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Brussels, 21 January 2008

Second European Commission -Israel Seminar on the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, Jerusalem, 22-23, January.

The second EC-Israel seminar on the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism will open in Jerusalem at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday January 22. Organised by the European Commission together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Yad Vashem, this will be the second professional seminar of experts from the European Commission and Israel to be held under the EU-Israel Action Plan in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

During two intensive days, European and Israeli experts will make presentations and engage in discussions based on their respective experiences. Topics to be covered will include: how to fight racism and anti-Semitism in cooperation with the young generation; how to increase mutual understanding; legal aspects and the response of governments and hate speech on TV. The participants will also tour Yad Vashem.

The seminar will be opened by Vice President of the European Commission responsible for Justice freedom and security Franco Frattini and Minister for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Anti-Semitism, Isaac Herzog. Referring to the seminar ahead of his arrival in Israel, Vice President Frattini said :

"The European Union has repeatedly condemned and rejected all manifestations of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, regardless of where they come from. These phenomena are incompatible with the values that the European Union is founded upon. Nothing justifies anti-Semitism, there is no place for it in Europe, nor anywhere in the world."

The European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan agreed-upon between the European Union and Israel includes commitments to promote the protection of human rights and to co-operate in the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. In this framework, a first professional seminar was held in Brussels in December 2006. The Jerusalem seminar will take forward the work achieved at that seminar.

To find out more about Vice President Frattini's work please see his website http://www.ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/frattini/index_en.htm