

**Official Statements by Rabbinic Movements in the UK
Regarding English Defence League**

R C U S

Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue
ועד הרבנים של ק"ק כנסת ישראל

The Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue advocates mutual tolerance and respect across religious and cultural boundaries, and opposes violence, mistrust and xenophobia. As long as EDL followers foment violence and do not attempt to build bridges with other communities, we cannot support them and we oppose their use of Jewish symbols in their campaigns.

Best wishes
Rabbi Dr J Shindler
Executive Director
Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue



“As we have done so consistently in the past, the Board of Deputies of British Jews condemns unreservedly the EDL, their ideology and their actions. It is clear for all to see that the EDL are solely intent on causing divisions and mistrust between different groups in British society. When they wave Israeli flags at a rally or demonstration, they do so only to goad the Muslim community and to stir communal tensions. This, and everything that the EDL stands for, is utterly abhorrent.”

ק"ק שערי הספרים

From Rabbi Dr Abraham Levy OBE



Founded 1591

Spanish & Portuguese
Jews' Congregation

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21st September 2011

The Spanish & Portuguese Jews' Congregation does not support the EDL and considers it a racist organisation. Their actions, including the waving of the Israeli flag is not something that this community supports and we wish to distance ourselves from the EDL and their actions.



"The Assembly of Reform Rabbis UK rejects the aims and methods of the EDL, and we oppose all efforts to incite hatred and antagonism in our society.

The Assembly of Reform Rabbis UK particularly objects to the EDL's use of the Israeli flag and to all the EDL's attempts to taunt Muslims.

We support the British tradition of acceptance and respect for all groups that work to make our country a place of justice, kindness and peace.

We pray that every community of our nation may meet in understanding and respect, united by love of goodness, and keeping far from violence and strife."

Rabbi Mark Goldsmith

Chairman
Assembly of Reform Rabbis UK

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Liberal Judaism is profoundly disturbed by the English Defense League's use of the Israeli flag in their recent protests. This misappropriation of a powerful symbol of our people's two thousand year history is deeply offensive, and attempts to drive a wedge between the Jewish community and our Muslim neighbours. The Israeli flag has no place in the hands of those who would perpetuate such divisiveness in this day and age.

Moreover, we condemn the ongoing destructive and discriminatory actions of the English Defense League, as we denounce all attempts to incite hatred and hostility in our society.

As seekers of God and children of Abraham, we stand with our Muslim brothers and sisters in the face of this unashamed Islamophobia, refusing to grant a victory to those who work to divide us. We are profoundly distressed and deeply saddened by the incidents of intimidation and violence committed against British Muslims, and we stand by the principle that to attack any religion in Britain is to do violence to the religious freedom of all citizens.

Our hope is that the people of Britain will not permit fanaticism to grow or prejudice to harden. We must continue to build on the British tradition of strength through diversity, accepting and respecting individuals of all cultures and backgrounds who work to make our country a haven of justice, tolerance and equality.

4th October 2011

Chairman Lucien J. Hudson
Deputy Chair Dr. Amanda Grant
Chief Executive Rabbi Danny Rich
Chairman of Rabbis Conference Rabbi Pete Tobias

Union of Liberal & Progressive Synagogues
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Statement from The Assembly of Masorti Synagogues:

We believe in creative and constructive partnership between the different communities and faiths which compose Britain today. We deplore any action intended to provoke hatred, violence and prejudice.

We therefore thoroughly reject the ideology of the EDL and deplore its conduct. We especially condemn the EDL's waving of the Israeli flag. It is abhorrent to Jews when what is to us a symbol of hope and the longing for peace is abused in this way.

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg
Senior Rabbi, the Assembly of Masorti Synagogues UK