

## Statue of Sholem Aleichem Defaced with Swastikas in Downtown Kyiv

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**WASHINGTON, DC, November 25, 2019** - We were informed by NCSEJ Kyiv representative, Ilya Bezruchko, that a statue of Sholem Aleichem in downtown Kyiv has been defaced with swastikas. The swastikas, painted in red, were discovered when worshipers arrived for morning prayers at the Brodsky Synagogue, located nearby.

The anti-Semitic attack received quick condemnation from Minister of Foreign Affairs Vadym Prystaiko, who called the act “disgusting, appalling, and in need of prompt investigation. The All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRU) also condemned the attack as “unacceptable” and called upon Ukrainians “to resist hostile attempts to ignite the flames of ethnic and inter-religious hostility in Ukraine”.

Boris Lozhkin, Ukrainian Jewish Confederation President, urged Ukraine's deputies to continue the work of the previous parliament to tighten legislation combating discrimination and anti-Semitism. Lozhkin stated, “...as a member of the world Jewish community, I hope that the new parliament will continue fighting for the rights and freedoms of every Ukrainian, regardless of one’s origin and religion.”

NCSEJ was in contact with the Embassy of Ukraine and urged the government to actively investigate the perpetrators of this crime and bring them to justice.

According to the Embassy, police have opened criminal proceedings under the “violation of equality of citizens upon their race, nationality or religious beliefs” of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, which provides for up to five years of imprisonment if convicted.

We will keep you informed of any new developments.

For more information, please contact NCSEJ CEO Mark B. Levin at [MLevin@ncsej.org](mailto:MLevin@ncsej.org) or at (202) 898-2500.

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### About NCSEJ

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