Statement by Michael S. Miller, Executive Vice President and CEO of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY) on NYC DSA Questionnaire

August 14, 2020 - That the NYC DSA would require candidates to pledge, if elected, not to travel to Israel is despicable. Elected officials should not be denied an immersive opportunity to deepen their understanding of Israel. Including this demand – on the same day that a historic peace agreement was announced between Israel and the United Arab Emirates – reveals a policy undeniably singed by anti-Semitism.

Last week, a NYC DSA co-chair failed to support the mere existence of the State of Israel. Today, the NYC DSA demands that candidates for NYC Council boycott travel to Israel and support the BDS movement, which calls for the dissolution of the world's only democratic and Jewish state. Utterly reprehensible.

JCRC-NY is the primary organizer of NYC Council missions to Israel and our mission alumni have widely attested to the educational value these first-hand experiences provide. Since 1982, JCRC-NY mission participants have consistently learned from a diverse array of journalists, activists, faith leaders, diplomats, security personnel, Jews, Christians, Muslims, Druze – Israelis and Palestinians. They are encouraged to ask hard questions in order to gain a broader understanding of the complex issues and use this knowledge to become better public officials. We look forward to accompanying the next mission of the New York City Council to Israel.

The Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY) serves as the central coordinating body and resource organization for the Jewish Community in the metropolitan New York area and as an advocate for a strong and secure State of Israel. An active force in New York civic and communal life, JCRC-NY secures, protects and enhances the New York Jewish community and builds working relationships within the Jewish community, with other ethnic and faith communities, and with public officials and government agencies.

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