Columbia under fire for inviting anti-Semitic Malaysian leader to speak

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Columbia University is under fire again for inviting an anti-Semitic world leader to speak on campus.

Columbia’s World Leaders Forum has invited Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad to speak on campus Wednesday.

He is infamous for calling Jewish people “hook-nosed” and claiming “Jews rule the world by proxy.”

The head of the World Jewish Congress told The Post that the Columbia welcome mat for Mohamad is beyond the pale.

“Unfortunately, it comes as no shock that the same institution that hosted the Jew-hating president of Iran, Mohamoud Ahmadinejad, will be hosting the unabashedly anti-Semitic Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mahathir Mohamad,” said World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder.

Ahmadinejad, then Iran’s president, spoke on campus in 2007 amid a storm of controversy.

“It is nothing short of astounding that a university that prides itself on being a place of tolerance and inclusion will be handing the microphone over to a leader who has described Jews as ‘hook-nosed.’ Prime Minister Mohamad has also been quoted saying that the ‘Europeans killed six million Jews out of 12 million. But today the Jews rule this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them,’” Lauder said in a statement.

“Columbia University should be ashamed of themselves. It is no surprise that incidents of anti-Semitism are on the rise in New York City when it is being preached from the stages of one of its premier universities,” he added.

Columbia U. President Lee Bollinger defended the invitation to the Malaysian leader in a letter to student groups, including Students Supporting Israel.

“This form of open engagement can sometimes be difficult, even painful. But to abandon this activity would be to limit severely our capacity to understand and confront the world as it is, which is a central and utterly serious mission for any academic institution,” Bollinger said.

He said such an invitation is neither a “validation” or “endorsement” of the speaker’s views.

“I find the anti-semitic statements of Prime Minister Mahathir to be abhorrently contrary to what we stand for, and deserving condemnation. Nevertheless, it is in these times that we are most strongly resolved to insist that our campus remain an open forum and to protect the freedoms essential to our university community,” Bollinger said.