

**Submission to the UN Human Rights Council “Commission of Inquiry” on Israel
created May 27, 2021 by resolution A/HRC/RES/S-30/1**

Organization: HARIF on behalf of the descendants of Jewish refugees from the Middle East and North Africa – victims of Arab and Iranian discrimination and repression on the basis of Jewish identity.

Biography: HARIF is a UK charity representing Jews from North Africa and the Middle East (UK no.1186454), and dedicated to promoting their history, culture and heritage. Over 2,000 years of history in the Middle East and North Africa came to an abrupt and tragic end just 50 years ago. Jews departed for Israel and the West, leaving an enormous cultural and economic void behind. In another 20 years, few Jews who were born in these countries will still be alive. A vital chapter of Jewish identity, history and culture – an entire civilisation – will be lost. HARIF is here to make sure it is not forgotten.

Issues to which our submission applies:

- (1) “Underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict in and between the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem [*sic*], and Israel; as well as systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity;”
- (2) “Facts and circumstances regarding alleged violations of international humanitarian law and alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up to and since 13 April 2021;”
- (3) “Identification of those responsible;”

Submission: (This submission itself does not constitute an endorsement of the “Commission of Inquiry” or its mandate.)

Algerian exodus

My silent departure from Algeria

7 February 2022

<https://www.jewishrefugees.org.uk/2022/02/my-silent-departure-from-algeria.html>

This year is the 60th anniversary of the mass exodus of some 130,000 Jews from Algeria. *Morial*, the Association of Algerian Jews in France, is collecting testimonies

from those who left. Here is an extract of an account by Jacqueline Kadji, nee Chichportich, who was nine years old when she left (with thanks: Leon):

The town of Bou Saada was known as the city of happiness. Life moved to the rhythm of the Jewish festivals – until September 1956, when my uncle was murdered on the eve of Rosh Hashana. He was shot at point blank range in his shop selling bolts of fabric. The whole community was in shock. Two months earlier, one M. Touboul had been murdered in a settling of scores. My father also received death threats. That's when he resolved to leave for Paris where his two sisters and family were living. That meant dropping everything and leaving my mother in charge of us. There were more and more murders and ambushes in the area. Fear gripped us. Families got ready to leave.

My mother planned our departure. She closed the shop and took all the stock into our house. It was a fun time, I played shops at home – a child's dream. The days went by as we worried about our future. My mother had decided to put us three older children on a coach to Algiers – my older sister, 29, my brother, 16, and me, nine.

On the day we left my mother told us something chilling: we had to go our separate ways as there was an ambush *en route*, 'so we don't all die at once'. Those words carved themselves into my young memory. Was I ever going to see my mother again? A tsunami of emotions engulfed me. I was cut adrift, separated for the first time. No tears, no expressions of fear – I did not want to upset my mum. without being capable of further explanations, I was already catapulted into the adult world, aged nine.

Four hundred kilometres and many hours later on the coach, watching the endless desert out of the window, pulling myself away from my childhood before arriving in Algiers. My mother had booked a hotel room for the three of us and for a few days we anxiously awaited her arrival and that of my little brother.

The second stage was leaving the port of Algiers, re-united at last, heading for France, first Marseille the Paris, our final destination. The crossing was long and uncomfortable – there were already many of us fleeing the beginnings of terrorism. A new life awaited us.