

**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.)

Exodus and dispossession of Jews from Palestine: Expulsion of 3,000 Jews from East Jerusalem in 1948

Jews expelled from E. Jerusalem in 1929

22 October 2014

<https://www.jewishrefugees.org.uk/2014/10/jews-expelled-from-e-jerusalem-in-1929.html>

This item from *Arutz Sheva* caught my eye because the descendants of those Jews expelled from 100 homes in the Eshel Avraham neighbourhood in East Jerusalem in 1929 still retained their title deeds until April of this year, when they decided to sell the

properties. Whether you agree or not with the efforts of the Israel Land Fund to ‘retain Jewish control’ over the property, is another matter.

Arieh King, Jerusalem councilman and director of the Israel Land Fund, told *Arutz Sheva* about the struggle he has been engaged in over the last year to keep a block of buildings in the “Eshel Avraham” Georgian neighborhood area of eastern Jerusalem in Jewish hands.

The site in question consists of a dunam of property, and three homes spread over 800 meters in the neighborhood located opposite the Damascus Gate to the north of the Old City on Hanevi'im Street. The neighborhood was established in 1892 by Jews who immigrated from Georgia and held 100 homes for affluent families – and later violently occupied by Arabs in the 1929 riots that killed seven local Jews and destroyed homes and synagogues in the neighborhood.

In April, around the Jewish holiday of Pesach (Passover), the Jewish families in France who still hold the rights to the block decided to sell it for roughly 11 million shekels (nearly \$3 million) and turned to a real estate agency to help them in doing so.

The agency owner suggested the site to King, who found a buyer from America interested in purchasing the property.

However, a few days later, roughly 10% of the property was sold to an Arab family despite the fact that the American buyer had “shaken hands” on the deal. Now King is trying to facilitate the purchase of the rest of the property, and fears outside influences and shady money may endanger the chances of keeping the property in Jewish hands.

In recent days, one of the owners agreed to sell 50% of the property in his possession, and currently both sides are engaged in negotiations.

Asked whether the whole issue is a matter of money, King told *Arutz Sheva* “yes and no, we don’t want the owners to take a loss and are even willing to pay him 10% more; on the other hand, we don’t want Jews to take advantage of the situation and try to extort us.”

“The main thing is to leave the property in Jewish hands,” stated King. “Jews were slaughtered there less than 100 years ago by an Arab mob; the place must not be transferred to Arab control.”