

**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: Jewish exodus and loss of property in Silwan (Jerusalem)***

## When the British evacuated Jews from Silwan

9 June 2021

<https://www.jewishrefugees.org.uk/2021/06/when-british-evacuated-jews-from-silwan.html>

**Blogger *Elder of Zion* has been busy researching the plight of the Jews of Silwan (Shiloah), who were forced out by violence from their homes in the 1930s. Whereas the media have rewritten history to make out that ‘Jewish settlers’ are harassing**

**Palestinians out of their homes, the truth is the reverse. A recently-discovered letter testifies to the fact that the Jewish inhabitants were frequently attacked and the British could no longer protect them. They evacuated the Jews, although they expected them to return shortly. See [original post](#):**

Buried in a *New York Times* article about the claims of both Jews and Arabs to houses in Silwan we see this:

In the late 1930s, the site was abandoned. Documents show the British authorities, which then ruled Palestine, evacuated the Jewish residents, fearing they were vulnerable to an Arab insurrection. After the British left and Jordan occupied the West Bank in 1948, Palestinian families moved onto the uninhabited plot.

That is a sanitized way of saying that the Jews were constantly attacked by Arabs in Silwan.

Here is the *Palestine Post* article about their evacuation, from August 15, 1938:



The British authorities were supposed to protect the homes. They didn't – Arabs broke into a synagogue and defiled the Torah there several months later:

## SILWAN YEMENITE JEWS' SCROLL DEFILED

Representatives of the District authorities, together with members of the Jerusalem Jewish Community Council, visited the village of Silwan on Tuesday, at the Council's request, in order to inspect the damage done to an ancient Scroll of the Law and other ritual articles by vandals in the evacuated Yemenite Jewish section of the village.

The Scroll had been brought over 50 years ago from the Yemen. It had been torn from its covers, defiled and fragments strewn about the floor of the synagogue.

The Jewish inhabitants of Silwan were evacuated about ten months ago by order of the authorities, who are stated to have assumed responsibility for the houses.

UPDATE: Here is the letter from British officials about the evacuation – and the expectation that the Jews would return shortly. (h/t Stephen)

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GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE

DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S OFFICES,  
JERUSALEM DISTRICT,  
JERUSALEM.

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE  
No. 7/106/10

26 AUG 1938	תש"ח
4/43/7	ב"ב

24 August, 1938.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th August, 1938, on the subject of the evacuation of the Jewish community from Silwan and to inform you that Government is considering the question of payment of the expenses of transport and rent incurred during the period until the refugees are able to return to their homes.

I have the honour to be  
Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,

*W. Van Heugt*  
Acting District Commissioner  
Jerusalem District.