

**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.)

ROOT CAUSES

The myth of Palestinian innocence

Posted on 4 February 2013

Point of No Return: Jewish Refugees from Arab and Muslim Countries

<https://www.jewishrefugees.org.uk/2013/02/the-myth-of-palestinian-innocence.html>

The Palestinian leadership's complicity with Nazism, and their role in incitement against and ethnic cleansing of the Jews of the Arab world, has been obfuscated. Time to explode the myth of Palestinian innocence, says Lyn Julius in her *Times of Israel* blog.

When people learn about the Jewish expulsion, they usually respond with sympathy. Jews from Arab countries are entitled to recognition and redress, they acknowledge.

But that recognition and redress must come from Arab countries, they say.

Indeed, one of the most enduring myths is that Palestinians bear no responsibility for the exodus of the Jews from 10 Arab countries. The Palestinians are innocent of any wrongdoing.

Regrettably, that position is borne of ignorance and wishful thinking. From the outset, the Palestinian cause was a pan-Arab nationalist cause. It has also a powerful Islamist dimension: Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood do not aim to set up a Palestinian state, so much as reclaim Islamic *wakf* land from the Jews. From an early stage the campaign for Palestine took on an antisemitic hue. If the [Fatah and Hamas unity deal](#) lasts, there will be nothing to choose between nationalist and religious rejectionism of a sovereign Jewish state.

Yet the role of the Palestinian Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini, in inciting anti-Jewish hatred and violence as early as the 1920s and 30s, is incontrovertible. Not only did the Mufti instigate deadly disturbances in Palestine in 1920 and 1929, it is well known that the riots which led to the murders of 133 Jews in [Hebron](#) and Safed were sparked by the lie that the [Al-Aqsa mosque was in danger](#).

Wherever the Mufti went in the Arab world, persecution and mayhem followed against the local Jews.

In December 1931, the Mufti held a World Islamic Congress in Jerusalem. An Iraqi delegate remarked, "If the Jews carry on we will have no choice but to treat the Jews in the only way they know."

"The only way they know" meant that Jews should be treated as submissive *dhimmis*, inferior to Muslims and at their total mercy. Following pressure from the Western powers on the Ottoman empire in the 19th century, *dhimmitude* had been largely abolished. But in 1921, Yemenite Jews claim it was due to Palestinian pressure that the decree forcing Jewish orphans to convert to Islam was reinstated. It happened after a Palestinian

delegation had visited Yemen to demand that the Imam stop all immigration to Palestine. The Orphans' Decree, argues scholar SD Goiten, was the single most important reason why Jews were desperate to [flee Yemen](#).

From 1931 on, the Mufti ceased to speak of Zionists but Jews. All Arabs were exhorted to treat the Jews of their countries 'as the Jews treat the Arabs of Palestine'.

The congress was followed by violence in Morocco – in Casablanca in 1932, Casablanca and Rabat in 1933, Rabat and Meknes in 1937 and Meknes in 1939. In Tunisia, an entente between Tunisian nationalists and the Palestinian Arab Higher Committee sparked violence in Sfax in 1932. All this well before the creation of the state of Israel.

British reports noted the intense propaganda in Yemen. Jewish refugees tried to make for British-controlled Aden. In 1939, a crowd was incited against the British and the Jews when they were shown fabricated photographs of Arab children hanging from telegraph poles. Other newspapers mendaciously reported that thousands of Arabs had been killed and bombs thrown at the Muslim holy places in Jerusalem.

But the worst incitement, with the deadliest consequences of all, took place in Iraq: In 1939, Palestinian teachers expelled by the British to Baghdad together with the Mufti, along with Syrian and Lebanese emigres, played a key role fanning the flames of Jew-hatred with false propaganda. The Mufti himself plotted a pro-Nazi coup to overthrow the pro-British government. With the British army at the gates of Baghdad, the Mufti was forced again into exile – but not before he had primed the Arabs of Baghdad to unleash the [Farhud](#) of 1941. The pogrom claimed the lives of at least 140 Jews, with many mutilated and raped, and 900 shops looted and wrecked.

Thereafter, the Mufti's collaboration with the Nazis, despite [strenuous Arab efforts](#) to downplay it, has been well-documented. Taking refuge in Berlin, he sought Nazi license to exterminate Jews in Arab countries as well as Palestine "in the same way as the problem was resolved in the Axis Countries." He raised a Bosnian Muslim SS division which slaughtered 80 percent of Bosnian Jewry. Before the mass Palestinian exodus, the Arab League hatched a postwar, coordinated [Nuremberg-style plan](#) to persecute their Jewish citizens as enemy aliens.

The Arab League's decision to launch their ill-fated 1948 war against the fledgling state of Israel came after fierce lobbying by the Palestinian Mufti.

No, the Palestinians are not the innocent victims they claim to be.

The Palestinians must face up to their responsibility not only for driving the conflict with Israel, but playing their part in the ethnic cleansing of the Jews from the Arab world – now 50 percent of Israel's Jewish citizenry. If their choices have led them down the path of misery and disaster, they have only their leadership to blame.