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AFTER THE ARAB SPRING: Anti-Semitism in Arab Countries

Arranged by Theme

Spring 2013



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AFTER THE ARAB SPRING: Anti-Semitism in Arab Countries

‘Arranged by Theme’

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Justice for Jews from Arab Countries

May 7, 2013

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	5
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THEMES

Violence Against Jews.....	8
----------------------------	---

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews.....	9
---	---

Desecration of Holy Sites, Religious Articles.....	16
--	----

Abrogating Freedom of Religion.....	18
-------------------------------------	----

Seizure of Jewish Archives and Communal Property.....	20
---	----

Thwarting Normal Relations with Jews.....	22
---	----

Positive Developments.....	27
----------------------------	----

Executive Summary

May 7, 2013

With the 'Arab Spring' came great hopes and expectations for democracy and greater freedoms for all citizens in the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf region. A closer look at what has transpired to the rights of minorities in the region has exposed a grim reality. It appears that the opposite has transpired for minorities in Arab countries – Jews, Christians and others.¹

This Report cites media accounts of blatant anti-Semitism, incitement and discriminatory practices, specifically targeting Jews and Judaism, replicated in virtually all Arab countries. Taken individually, each act or statement may appear less than consequential; taken together, they represent a disquieting litany of antagonism against Jews.

It is true that in all Middle East Arab countries, Israel and Zionism are primary targets of Arab rancor. Yet, virtually all of the media references cited in this Report make no mention of Israel and/or Zionism. The antipathy is directed against Jews and Judaism – not Israel. The specious accusations foments hatred against all Jews, irrespective of where they may live.

This past year, the last Jew in Algeria assisted by a Jewish international aid society, Mrs. Esther Azoulay, passed away in July 2012.² Our sense of loss was magnified with the recent passing of Carmen Weinstein, the long-time leader of the Jewish Community of Egypt. These losses are symbolic of the inexorable march towards the extinguishing of the once-vibrant Jewish life and communities in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen.

Yet to-day, in these countries virtually devoid of Jews, anti-Semitism continues to run rampant, incitement against Jews persists, and many Government leaders, party officials, clergy and academics seek to thwart normal relations between Muslims and Jews.

This report does not purport to be an exhaustive list of all such anti-Semitic incidents. Each of the incidents cited in this Report have been reported on by credible media outlets – English,

¹ Harris, Robin, "We Abandon Christians in the East At Our Peril", Standpoint, April 2013

<http://standpointmag.co.uk/node/4905/full>;

- Ibrahim, Raymond, "Muslim Persecution of Christians", Gatestone Institute, April 18, 2013
<http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/3673/muslim-persecution-of-christians-february-2013>
- "Persecuted Christians and Other Religious Minorities in the New Middle East: Formulating an Effective U.S. Policy Response", Video of Conference convened by the Hudson Institute, June 26, 2012
http://www.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=HUDSON_upcoming_events&id=961

² <http://jdcambassadorscircle.blogspot.com.au/2012/01/jdcs-work-comes-to-close-in-algeria.html>

French, Arabic or Hebrew. Cited in this Report are the most serious, representative samples of events and patterns, usually transpiring in more than one Arab state.

Findings

- **Violence against Jews** – There were three reported deaths of Jews in Tunisia, Yemen and Morocco. Government leaders, party officials, clergy and others regularly engage in ‘a call to violence’, urging their followers “to shoot the Jews”; “to kill the Jews – it’s a religious duty”; that Jews “deserved to be killed”; “annihilate them”; that Islam “instructs Jihad against Jews”; “drive them out of our countries”; “nurture hatred for them”; and that “loathing Jews is a form of worship of Allah”.
- **Anti-Semitism/Incitement Against Jews** – There is an tendency to demonize and humiliate the Jews who are called “apes”, “pigs”, “monkeys”; “donkeys”; “dogs”; and a “cancer” on the world.

Moreover, the portrayal of Jews is fraught with conspiracy theories as Jews are accused of “trying to poison the Prophet Muhammad”; “a source of evil in human society”; that “Jews spread corruption on earth”; that “Jews spark Wars”; that “every catastrophe in the world is the handiwork of Jews”; that 9/11 was “a theatrical show run by Jews”; that Jews control the world’s gold”; that “Jews use porn to corrupt Muslims”; that “Jews support whorehouses”; that “Jews have no history”; that “the Jewish religion is a fairy tale”; that “Jews use slaughtered victims blood to make Purim sweets”; etc.

- **Thwarting Norman Relations with Jews** – In media reports in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yemen, Jews are singled out in the Arab press as “bloodthirsty”, “treacherous”, “slaughterers”, “deviant”, “corrupt”, “thugs”, “obstinate”, “frauds”, “warmongers”, “deceitful” and “exploitive”.

In light of these vile characterizations, many in Arab countries seek to thwart relations with Jews, including: the cancellation of a concert that a Jewish singer was to give in Algeria; Jews being jailed upon their return to Libya; cancellation of invitations to Jews to attend meetings and conferences in Arab countries; film on Jews causes an uproar in Egypt; Jews excluded from a National Dialogue Conference in Yemen; and threats made against any Jews wishing to return to Egypt.

- **Desecration of Holy Sites, Religious Articles** – Instances include: graves being desecrated in Libya; converting Jewish tombs into mosques; leaving old Torah scrolls unpreserved in Iraq; two synagogues ransacked in Tunisia; and Jewish cemeteries vandalized in Tunisia.
- **Abrogating Freedom of Religion** – As exemplified by the enforcing of Shari’a law in Egypt; blocking Jewish pilgrimages; preventing services in synagogues on Jewish holidays; issuing *fatwas* preventing Jews from visiting their own holy sites; and

- *Confiscation Of Jewish Assets and Archives* – Taking control of Jewish community assets in Egypt; preventing Jews from retaining Jewish communal records from Iraq and Egypt.

Points to Consider

- A distinction must be made between; a) state-sanctioned discriminatory measures; b) events precipitated by what is called the “Arab street’ which the State is unable to prevent; and c) events precipitated by the “Arab street’ which the State has encouraged or is unwilling to counter.

Anti-Semitic propaganda, left unchecked, has an impact on popular sentiment. After the ‘Arab Spring’, new governments reflect popular sentiment more than their predecessors. These governments seem even less willing to stand against street anti-Semitism than their predecessors were.

For the purposes of this Report however, all instances are reported, irrespective of how they were precipitated, as they generate the same result – violence and/or discrimination against Jews and Judaism.

- Morocco is the one Arab country that must be singled out for its unique tolerance, the leadership for which is provided by His Excellency, King Mohamed VI. In contrast to countries that prevented pilgrimages to Jewish holy sites, Morocco remained open and hospitable to Jewish pilgrims; in juxtaposition to the desecration of cemeteries elsewhere, Morocco took measures to refurbish Jewish cemeteries; etc. Morocco cannot be called a panacea for Jewish life but it still retains, and seeks to protect, the Arab world’s largest Jewish community, estimated at 3,000 people.
- Rather than focus solely on the negative, positive developments for Jews in Arab countries are reported on as well in the Report.

Conclusions

- 1) In the absence of previous such Reports, it cannot be statistically shown that anti-Semitism in Arab countries in 2012 differed from previous years. However, as an anecdote, before the advent of the ‘Arab Spring’, Jews were able, with some discretion, to visit virtually every Arab country. To-day, such travel is being discouraged by Arab regimes (e.g. forbidding pilgrimages; arresting returning Jews; etc.);
- 2) International efforts are required to underscore the need to preserve Jewish religious and/or holy sites in countries where there are no longer any Jews. The appropriate UN, international Jewish entities, human rights groups, etc. – must be called upon to assist in protecting Jewish holy sites, including tombs, cemeteries, synagogues, etc.; and

- 3) The United States should be requested to send a fact-finding mission to visit 13 Jewish holy sites in Iraq; assess their condition; and recommend ways to have the locations preserved and protected as Jewish holy sites.

Violence Against Jews

74-Year-Old Moroccan Jews Beaten To Death with Hammer - March 25, 2012

Moroccan media reported that a Jewish man was murdered in the northern city of Fez. The murderer struck the victim, identified only as "Benjamin," in the head with a hammer. The assailant fled the scene and has yet to be apprehended. The victim was rushed to a nearby hospital but was pronounced dead on arrival. The Initial investigation revealed that the victim was in charge of collecting rent from properties under Jewish ownership. Fez' attorney general order an autopsy and authorities say the investigation is ongoing.

Source: <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4208349,00.html>

Yemeni Jew Stabbed To Death in Sanaa - May 22, 2012

A member of the Jewish community in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa was stabbed to death by a Muslim man accusing him of witchcraft; AFP quoted the man's son as saying. Aharon Zindani succumbed to his wounds at an area hospital after being critically injured in the attack, the community's rabbi said. Zindani, 50, "was stabbed at Saawan market near the US Embassy in northeast Sanaa," his son Yehya was quoted as saying. "He received stab wounds to his neck and stomach." Yehya described the attacker as a "well-known person who says my father has ruined and bewitched him."

Source: <http://www.ipost.com/NationalNews/Article.aspx?id=271015>

Plot to Kidnap Local Tunisian Jews – November 1, 2012

Tunisian police have arrested four people for allegedly plotting to kidnap local Jews for ransom, an official said on Thursday. This event has heightened the feeling of insecurity among the dwindling Jewish community after last year's "Arab Spring" revolt led to a resurgence of Islamists.

"The security forces intercepted a plan to kidnap young Jews in Zarzis. Police arrested four young men and seized two weapons," the official, Lofi Hidouri, told Reuters. Perez Trabelsi, head of the Jewish community in Djerba, said a policeman was among the four arrested. "There is a big worry in Djerba and Zarzis. The government should provide us with more protection," Trabelsi said. An "intimidation campaign" was underway to force Jews to leave, he said. "This is our country, we will not leave it."

Source: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/11/01/uk-tunisia-jews-idUKBRE8A010720121101>

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews

Egyptian Columnist Says the Jewish Religion Is a Fairy Tale – January 1, 2012

In an interview aired on CBC TV (Egypt), Lebanese columnist Jihad Al-Khazen said: ""In Jerusalem, there are no archeological remains of the Jews or any of their prophets.. They have no history...

"They did not enter our countries, nor did they leave them. They were never in Egypt or in the Sinai..

The Jewish religion was recorded after 1,000 years. It's like you and me discussing family tales about the Crusades.... This religion is a fairy tale. We must sever Islam's times with [the Jews]. Their Prophets are not the prophets of the Muslims. Islamic scholars must have the courage to show that these people are frauds. That religion cannot possibly be true."

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6124.htm>

During Haniyeh Visit, Thousands in Tunisia Chant "Kill the Jews"- January 11, 2012

In the aftermath of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh's visit to Tunisia, the Tunisian Jewish community is shaken. Many in the small community feel the Tunisian government was slow to condemn violent chants of "kick the Jews- it's our religious duty," "expel the Jews- it's our religious duty," and "kill the Jews- it's our religious duty" by a group attending the welcoming ceremony of Haniyeh at the Tunis Carthage Airport.

Ennahda officials have condemned the anti-Jewish chants as isolated incidents not reflecting the values of the Ennahda Party. Rachid Ghannouchi the leader of Ennahda condemned the anti-Jewish slogans as unrepresentative of the spirit of Islam or its teachings. He attributed the slogans to a fringe handful of individuals aiming to undermine the image of Ennahda among hundreds who came to welcome Haniyeh. "Ennahda calls on Tunisians of all faiths to stand together and be united for the good of the country," he said.

Source: <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2012/01/11/tunisian-jewish-community-horrified-demanding-quick-government-response-in-aftermath-of-haniyeh-visit/>

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews

Anti-Semitic Articles on Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood Website – January 13, 2013

The website of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Egypt, www.lkhwanonline.com, contains articles with anti-Semitic motifs, including Holocaust denial and descriptions of the "Jewish character" as covetous, exploitative, and a source of evil in human society. While articles of this tenor have been posted on the site in the past, their posting has taken on greater importance in light of the group's increasing strength following the ouster of the Mubarak regime.

In a June 2011 sermon posted on the website, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt General Guide Muhammad Badi' discussed the Jews, their traits, and their actions: "Allah warned us against the deceit of the Jews and their dangerous role in sparking wars: 'Whenever they kindle a fire for war Allah puts it out, and they strive to make mischief in the land; and Allah does not love the mischief-makers [Koran 5:64].

Source: http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/5992.htm#_ednref19

Morsi: Zionists Are Descendants of Apes, Must Be Driven Out Of Our Countries – January 15, 2013

Egyptian media aired a video showing President Mohammed Morsi making harsh statements against Jews in 2010 when he served as the Muslim Brotherhood's official spokesman.

A video of a speech that Mr. Morsi gave at a rally in his hometown in the Nile Delta nearly three years ago shows him urging his listeners "to nurse our children and our grandchildren on hatred for them: for Zionists, for Jews." In another video of a television interview he gave the same year, Mr. Morsi criticized Zionists in recognizably anti-Semitic terms, as "these bloodsuckers who attack the Palestinians, these warmongers, the descendants of apes and pigs."

"They must not be given any opportunity and must not stand on any Islamic or Arab land. They must be driven out of our countries."

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/video/2013/01/15/world/100000002006079/egypt-leaders-anti-semetic-remarks.html?ref=world#100000002006079>

Update: A spokesman for President Mohamed Morsi said on Jan. 16, 2013 that inflammatory comments that he made about Jews before taking office had been intended as criticism of Israeli policies toward the Palestinians but had been taken out of context. The spokesman said that Mr. Morsi respected all monotheistic religions and religious freedom.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/17/world/middleeast/egypts-morsi-says-slurs-of-jews-were-taken-out-of-context.html>

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews

Morsi: Zionists Are Descendants of Apes con't ... This story continues with reports of a January 16, 2013 meeting that President Morsi held with a delegation of seven US Senators, led by Sen. John McCain. At first, the Egyptian president defended himself by saying he did not harbor negative feelings about Judaism or Jewish people.

“He was attempting to explain himself ... then he said, ‘Well, I think we all know that the media in the United States has made a big deal of this and we know the media of the United States is controlled by certain forces and they don’t view me favorably,’” Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) told Foreign Policy Magazine. Asked if Morsi specifically named the Jews as the forces that control the American media, Coons replied that all the senators believed the implication was obvious. “He did not say [the Jews], but I watched as the other senators physically recoiled, as did I,” Coons said. “I thought it was impossible to draw any other conclusion.”

Sources:

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/01/23/exclusive_morsi_implies_jews_control_the_american_media

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/morsi-jewish-controlled-media-distorted-apes-and-pigs-remark/>

Egyptian Cleric Accuses Jews of Trying to Poison Muhammad – January 20, 2012

In an address aired on Al-Rahma TV, Egyptian cleric Hazem Shuman said: "I address [the Jews] on behalf of 85 million Egyptians, whose hearts beat with hatred for the Jews, and with the knowledge of what the Jews did to us and of how Allah warned us about them...

The Jews of today are the Jews of Khaybar, who tried to poison the Prophet Muhammad. They are the Jews of Banu Nadhir, who tried to kill the Prophet Muhammad. They are the Jews of Banu Qaynuqa', who tried to lift up a Muslim woman's dress. Jews will be Jews.

We know what you are like, you Jews, and we know your hatred toward the religion of Allah, toward the servants of Allah, and toward the Muslims worldwide. ..

...These Jews are a cancer. These Jews are a catastrophe. There is not a catastrophe in the world that is not the handiwork of the Jews. These Jews are a cancer in the body of planet Earth, and if permitted, it will spread and infect the entire body. Getting rid of these Jews is a must."

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6014.htm>

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews

Egyptian Clerics Urge to "Shoot the Jews" – March 6, 2012

On March 6, the Egyptian Al-Rahma TV featured a program in which Egyptian clerics discussed the Jews. Gharib Ramadhan, for example, said that "There are many traits that characterize the Jews, and the Koran focused on a few of them, such as the violation of commitments, from which we suffer to this day. Not just us in Egypt – the entire world suffers from this... Wherever they go they get deported and then they return... If they are good people, how come people get rid of them? Allah punished them by transforming them into apes and pigs..."

In the same program, Cleric 'Alaa said that "The [Jews] are treacherous. Allah, who created them, told us so. We must be resolute and fill hearts with hatred and loathing. By Allah, the hatred and loathing of Jews is a form of worship. When we make our children loathe the Jews, it is a form of worship of Allah. These are people hated and loathed by Allah."

Cleric Abd Al-Rahman Al-Sawi stated: "In the Koran, Allah called the Jews 'Donkeys'...; We mean the Jews of Today...;" I Tell Our Children: "Shoot the Jews"

"[The Jews] support all the means of corruption. They support whorehouses. They support satellite dishes in order to air whatever they like. Birth control pills and devices are supported by the Jews. [...]"

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6195.htm>

Jews Accused of Using Victims' Blood in Purim Sweets – March 14, 2012

In an article in the Egyptian daily Al-Wafd, columnist Fikriya Ahmad wrote that the Jews, throughout their history, used to celebrate Purim by wreaking murderous vengeance on non-Jews and using their slaughtered victims' blood to make Purim sweets.

"Jewish history documents murderous actions [perpetrated as part] of Purim celebrations. On this festival, the extremists among them used to hunt down or abduct a non-Jew, slaughter him, and then hang him up like a sacrifice to drain his blood. Alternatively, they would subject him to barbaric torture by stabbing him deeply and letting him bleed into a container, while they took pleasure in his screams and his pain. The blood would be dried into a powder, which they would mix with flour to make into pastries..."

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6223.htm>

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews

Tunisian Salafist Preacher Makes Death Threats Against Jews - March 26, 2012

A Salafist preacher made death threats against the Jews during a large-scale march on avenue Habib Bourguiba, Tunis's main artery. "Get ready for the fight: Jews! Jews! The fight is for God's cause. Paradise! Paradise!" the religious leader with a white beard and djellaba screamed into his loudhailer while the crowd boiled over.

The President of the Tunisian Jewish community, Roger Bismuth, told Associated Press that he called on the authorities to react. "I have only contempt for these people. They are not worthy of respect because they do damage to their country, my country, because I am a Tunisian," he said.

Source: <http://cybersion.wordpress.com/2012/03/26/tunis-menaces-contre-les-juifs-lors-dune-manifestation-de-salafistes-photos-videos/>

Algerian Muslim Cleric Defends Jihadist Jew-Killer Merah – March 30, 2012

Algerian cleric Ali Belhadj, former vice-president of the Islamic Salvation Front, embraced in a sermon the Toulouse Jew-killer Mohammed Merah. One of his followers in the mosque said: "...the mujahid Muhammad Merah was a lion. Merah was not in the wrong, because there are fatwas by great scholars who said: If they kill our women, kill their women, and if they kill our children, kill their children... he was not in the wrong." To this Belhadj responded: "May Allah bless you..."

Source: <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2012/04/algerian-muslim-cleric-misunderstands-islam-defends-jihadist-jew-killer-merah.html>

Anti-Semitic 9/11 Conspiracy Theories in Yemen– September 4, 2012

In interviews on Al-Masirah TV, Yemeni researcher Majed Al-Mitri said that "What happened to the Twin Towers, the war against the so-called terror, and the American breeding of the so-called Al-Qaeda organization... All those operations and theatrical shows are run by the U.S. and by the Jews in a clandestine manner, in an effort to target Islam and the Muslims."

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews con't...

Yemeni cleric Muhsen Al-Shami said: "The destruction of the bastion of this nation [Yemen] is the true terrorism...The truth is that the fountain of terrorism and its roots are the people (Jews) who, Allah said, 'strive to spread corruption in the land.' These are the people who, because of their corruption, their aggression, their disobedience, and their transgressions, were transformed by Allah into apes and pigs."

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6663.htm>

Egyptian Official: Jews Control World's Gold or Money – September 11, 2012

In an interview aired on Al-Nas TV, Mahmoud Khalil, a member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, said that: "The US banks have dragged one another into crisis. America is involved in global thievery... The Jews brought their thieving [nature] to America. They have used all methods of global criminality... These people are slaughterers. They are the greatest thugs in history..."

The Jews are money merchants. Throw a Jew into the sea, and he will emerge with a fish in his mouth... They successfully infiltrated the U.S. political decision-making centers, and then they gained control of the world's gold or money through the economy."

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6883.htm>

Egyptian Cleric: Jews Using Porn to Corrupt Muslims – November 23, 2012

In a program aired on Tahrir TV, Egyptian cleric Abd Al-Fattah Abu Zayd said: "Do you know what 'soft power' is? It is urges, sex, women and 4.2 million porn websites on the Internet. Just imagine – 4.2 million porn websites, the No. 1 purpose of which is to corrupt the nation of Muhammad."

Brothers, who finances those 4.2 million websites? ... When the use of armed force failed them, they decided to use soft power, to invade the hearts and minds of the nation of Muhammad... It was said in The Protocols of the abominable elders of Zion, that alcohol and prostitutes would be more capable of destroying Muslim youths than a thousand cannons. They (Jews) will drown them (Muslims) in urges and desires. That is their plan."

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6841.htm>

Anti-Semitism, Incitement Against Jews

Jews are Prophet Slayers and Apes, Tunisian Cleric Prays for Allah to Annihilate Them - December 10, 2012

In a Friday Friday sermon in Rades, Tunisia, which was aired November 30, 2012 on Hannibal TV, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Suhayli stated: "Ever since the days of the prophets, the Jews have been obstinate. They rebelled against the decrees and laws of Allah. Whenever Allah commanded them to do something, they did the exact opposite.

"Oh Allah, you know everything that those accursed Jews have done – the corruption they spread on earth, their diverting of people from your path, and their humiliation of your servants. Strike them with a resounding blow, and do not leave a single one of them. Oh Lord, rip them asunder, and disperse them throughout the land, as you did with their followers, because they have invoked the sanctities of Islam. "Soon the unjust will know what vicissitude will befall them."

"Oh Lord, do not leave a single one of them on Earth, for if you do, they will lead your servants astray, and they will beget none but sinners and infidels. Allah, make the wombs of their women barren, and dry up the loins of their men. Strike them with Your hatred and wrath, oh You who delivers harsh punishment and torment."

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6865.htm>

Imam Backtracks: "I Didn't Mean Kill ALL Jews" – December 24, 2012

Reactions were forthcoming following the November 30, 2012 sermon delivered by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Suhayli in Rades, which aired live on Hannibal TV in Tunisia. The sermon was rife with anti-Semitic comments and Al-Suhayli called upon Allah to destroy the Jews: "Strike them with a resounding blow, and do not leave a single one of them... rip them asunder... make the wombs of their women barren, and dry up the loins of their men."

The sermon sparked many responses in the Tunisian media and the Tunisian Association for the Support of Minorities filed a lawsuit against Ahmad Suhayli for "incite(ment to) hatred between races, religions and people".

Al-Suhayli responded in an address posted on the Internet. In his address, he said that contrary to his critics' claims, he had never called to kill Tunisia's Jews, but had referred to a specific sect of Jews mentioned in the Koran which, he said, still exists today in Palestine.

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6892.htm>
<http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2012/12/19/97001-20121219FILWWW00618-antisemitisme-plainte-contre-un-imam.php>

Desecration/Preservation of Holy Sites, Religious Articles

Jewish and Christian Graves Desecrated in War Cemetery in Libya - March 1, 2012

Footage of armed men desecrating Christian and Jewish graves of British and Italian soldiers killed in World War II in the Benghazi War Cemetery and the Benghazi British Military Cemetery was posted on the Internet. The footage shows men kicking over headstones and smashing a cross, and calling the dead in the cemetery "dogs." One Libyan youth states: "Check out the sign on the one in front of you. There is even Israeli writing on it. It's in Hebrew." [...]

Following the incident, Libya's leading National Transitional Council (NTC) issued a statement apologizing and saying that it would pursue those responsible: "

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6142.htm>

Iraqi Sheikh Allegedly Desires to Preserve Ezekiel's Tomb - May 24, 2012

Canon Andrew , an Anglican Priest, met with Sheikh Al Gahalivi who, together with his team, is responsible for the renovations of Ezekiel's Tomb in Northern Iraq. "I wanted to preserve the Tomb for us all," says Sheikh Al Gahalivi. "I want you to know that the Jewish shrine is safe with us, Ezekiel is important to us too. I want to build a visitors center around the Tomb to protect it and to make it ready for when Jews, Christians and Muslims can all visit the Tomb together."

Source: <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/a-conversation-with-the-vicar-of-baghdad/>

Editor's Note: Since 2010, there have been reports that the shrine of Ezekiel at al-Kifl (Kefel) at Hilla, south of Baghdad, is being vandalized - the Sefer Torah in the synagogue adjoining the tomb was missing; Jewish books in the shrine's library had been stolen; and the Shrine itself has been defaced.

An April 2, 2010 report in *Al-Hayat* quotes the official in charge of the Shi'a Waqf (Endowment), Salih al-Haydari who denies that the shrine belongs to the Jews. The Shi'a Waqf, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, is currently restoring the shrine.

Media reports allege that religious authorities in Iraq are determined to convert the tomb of the Jewish prophet Ezekiel into a Mosque. The process began as the ancient Hebrew inscriptions adorning the inside of the Tomb were defaced and covered over by plaster.

Source: <http://www.haaretz.com/news/report-iraqi-workers-erase-hebrew-from-prophet-ezekiel-s-tomb-1.261985>

http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/02/ezekiels_tomb_on_the_edge_of_d.html

Desecration/Preservation of Holy Sites, Religious Articles

The Struggle for the Torah Scrolls of Iraq - August 31, 2012

The dire conditions of the Jewish Torah scrolls kept in the Iraq Museum in Baghdad have attracted the attention of Canon Andrew White, an Anglican Priest, who is known as the Vicar of Baghdad. During a private tour of the Museum, White saw rows and rows of Torah scrolls just stacked up on the dirty floors, all at risk since not properly preserved or displayed. The US State Department confirms that: "We are aware that the government of Iraq holds a number of Torah scrolls in the Iraqi National Museum."

Source: <http://www.aish.com/jw/s/Struggle-for-the-Scrolls.html>

Two Synagogues Ransacked in Tunisia - November 14, 2012

Two synagogues were ransacked in the Tunisian town of Sfax. Vandals forced open the gate and front door of the Edmond Azria synagogue in rue Philippe Thomas. This synagogue was restored in 2010 by volunteers and with the help of Jewish community funds. The back door of the Beth-El synagogue was discovered open and the synagogue plundered once more. It's the second time that the Beth-El synagogue in Avenue de Picville has been broken into.

Source: <http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.com/2012/11/two-synagogues-ransacked-in-sfax-tunisia.html>

Tunisian Official: Jewish Cemetery Vandalized – December 2012

More than 68 gravestones were found ransacked and graves were looted at a Jewish cemetery in the coastal Tunisian town of Sousse. A Tunisian security official said the graves were damaged over the last month. According to a radio report, Tunisian youths believing rumors that the Jews bury their dead with gold were responsible for the grave looting.

The office of Prime Minister Hammadi Jebali of the Islamist Ennahda party released a statement expressing "deep indignation at any criminal act undermining Tunisia's cultural and historical heritage," and said that efforts were under way to work with security forces and the judiciary to ensure that attacks on cemeteries and mausoleums stopped.

Source: <http://www.ita.org/news/article/2013/01/28/3117991/tunisian-jewish-cemetery-vandalized>

Abrogating Freedom of Religion

Egyptian Religious Police to Enforce Islamic Shari'a – January 26, 2012

Following the Egyptian revolution, which granted freedom of expression and assembly to many elements, a religious police force was recently established in Egypt. Dubbed "The Authority for Commanding Good and Forbidding Evil," similar to the Saudi religious police, it aims to enforce compliance with Islamic shari'a law.

However, unlike the Saudi religious police, this force does not operate on behalf of the state. In fact, it is unclear precisely who is behind it. Its Facebook page, launched December 25, 2011, states that its founders are members of the Salafi Al-Nour party, "the closest party to Allah's shari'a." The page is publishing official statements from the religious police.

The religious police will encourage citizens to attend prayers, and merchants to close shop during prayer time; ensure that tourists respect the customs and the commandments of the Islamic faith; report shari'a violators to the authorities; etc. Members of the police force would wear a white robe with a religious police emblem and would carry electric prods.

Barbers in Port Fouad reported that bearded men from the religious police, clad in white robes and carrying sticks, had entered their shops and warned them not to shave the beards of Muslim men, since this was forbidden by the *shari'a*.

Source: <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6029.htm>

Tunisian Jews Stay Away From Annual Celebration on Djerba - May 11, 2012

Security concerns and threats from some Salafi Islamists kept thousands of Jewish pilgrims away from an annual celebration on the Tunisian island of Djerba. No more than 500 pilgrims attended the religious festival celebrated a month after Passover at one of Africa's oldest synagogues - an event that used to attract thousands of visitors.

Numbers have plummeted since the overthrow of authoritarian secular leader Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in a popular uprising in January last year, leading to months of political uncertainty, and the rise to power in October of an Islamist-led government.

Source: <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Jews-stay-away-from-Tunisia-festival-20120510>

Abrogating Freedom of Religion

Egypt to Block Jewish Pilgrims from Holy Site - June 27, 2012

Egypt's Foreign Ministry told Israel that it would not be "appropriate" for Israeli pilgrims to make an annual visit to the tomb of a 19th-century Jewish holy man in the Nile Delta. Egypt notified Israel that it would be "impossible to hold the annual ceremony because of the political and security situation in the country," the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said. Ceremonies at the tomb of Rabbi Yaakov Abuchatzeira have triggered yearly political sparring in Egypt throughout most of the last decade.

An Islamist politician, Gamal Heshmat of the Muslim Brotherhood, involved in organizing protests against the march said that visiting the gravesite in the village of Daymouta, 112 miles north of Cairo, would be a "suicide mission" for Israelis. Egypt's daily Al-Ahram newspaper reported Tuesday that 31 parties and groups had joined this year's campaign to block Israeli pilgrims from reaching the site.

Source: <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2012/06/glorious-democratic-arab-spring-bars-jews-from-holy-site.html>

Alexandria Will Not Have A Rabbi And Minyan For Rosh Hashanah August 10, 2012

Egyptian authorities have ordered the cancellation of Jewish New Year and Yom Kippur celebrations at Alexandria's Eliahou Hanabi Synagogue due to security concerns. Alexandria's Eliahou Hanabi Synagogue is one of the few active synagogues left in Egypt.

Several Israelis have already been denied permission to attend the festivals, the synagogue's former Rabbi Abraham Nino-Dayan told the BBC. It will be the first time since the synagogue was built in 1836 that the services will not take place. "This is the end of Jewish life in Egypt," the president of the International Association of Egyptian Jews, Levana Zamir, told the BBC.

Source: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/51913/Egypt/Politics-/Jewish-festivals-cancelled-at-Alexandria-synagogue.aspx>

UPDATE: Egypt eventually permits Jews to hold *minyan*-less services (no quorum of 10) in the Alexandria Synagogue. The recent practice of importing people to help make *minyan* will not occur this year, according to Government officials, because of the security situation in Egypt.

Source: <http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.co.uk/2012/09/egypt-permits-jews-to-hold-minyan-less.html>

Abrogating Freedom of Religion

Egyptian Cleric Issues Fatwa on Jews Visiting Own Holy Sites - September 7, 2012

Dr. Abdul Hamid al-Atrash, the head of the Fatwa Committee of Al Azhar in Egypt, has issued a ruling that Arabs may ban Jews from visiting their holy sites in Arab lands. Al-Atrash says that as long as Muslims "cannot travel to Jerusalem while it is in Jewish hands," then Muslims have the right to bar Jews from visiting their own holy places, under the Islamic concept of "reciprocity." Therefore, he says, Egyptian authorities have the right to ban Jews from going to the Alexandria synagogue on Rosh Hashanah.

Editor's note: It is worth noting that there are no restrictions stopping most Muslims from visiting Jerusalem, via Jordan. On the contrary, it was the influential Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, chairman of the International Union for Muslim Scholars, who issued two years ago a fatwa against Muslims visiting Jerusalem. A few months ago the Mufti of Egypt, Ali Gomaa, had free access to Jerusalem and visited the Al Aqsa Mosque without impediment.

Source: <http://elderofziyon.blogspot.co.uk/2012/09/prominent-egyptian-cleric-issues-fatwa.html>

Seizure of Jewish Archives and Communal Property

A Muslim Takes Full Control of Alexandria's Jewish Community – April 1, 2012

The Jewish community in Alexandria no longer runs its own affairs, a member of a prominent Jewish family has discovered on a visit to Egypt in March.

A Muslim, the former doorman of the Nebi Daniel synagogue has taken over the leadership of the community from Yousef Gaon. Abdel Nabi collects the community's rents, ostensibly to take care of Jewish communal affairs. The Nebi Daniel synagogue was the flagship of the Jewish community of Egypt.

Source: <http://elderofziyon.blogspot.co.uk/2012/04/springtime-muslims-take-full-control-of.html>

Seizure of Jewish Archives and Communal Property

Iraq in Dispute with US over Jewish Archives - July 18, 2012

Iraq has cut cooperation with the United States on archaeological exploration because Washington has not returned Iraq's Jewish archives, Tourism and Archaeology Minister Liwaa Smaisim told AFP....Smaisim, a member of powerful anti-U.S. cleric Moqtada al-Sadr's movement, said that Iraq will use "all the means" to pursue the return of the archives.

The Ministry of Culture says that millions of documents including the Jewish archives were transferred to the United States. Seventy percent of the Jewish archives are Hebrew-language documents, with another 25 percent in Arabic and five percent in other languages. The archives, which were found in the flooded basement of the intelligence headquarters in Baghdad in 2003, include Torah scrolls, Jewish law and children's books, Arabic-language documents produced for Iraqi Jews and government reports about the Jewish community.

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/06/25/222684.html>

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Elizabeth Jones told Al Sumaria News that the archive is in the United States to be "restored and photographed." In her Monday interview, Jones said that Iraq had requested the archive back, and that the U.S. was making good efforts to return looted artifacts to the country.

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/09/04/236076.html>

Police Seize Papers on Egyptian Jewish Assets - November 30, 2012

In what the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram is calling "the most dangerous case of security breach in history", Egyptian authorities confiscated some 1.7 million documents reportedly proving Jewish ownership of land and assets in Cairo. The documents were reportedly about to be shipped out of the country to Israel.

Elaph, a Saudi-owned news site, reported that Egyptian police received notice that the packages were being held at a shipping company in the Nasser City district of Cairo. Upon arriving at the scene, police found documents dating back to the 19th century. The documents, according to the security source, weighed over two tons. According to Elaph, Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi is personally following the case, which it said affects Egypt's national security.

Source: <http://www.timesofisrael.com/jewish-ownership-documents-confiscated-by-cairo-on-national-security-grounds/>

Thwarting Normal Relations with Jews

Outrage At Macias Invitation To Visit Algeria - July 12, 2012

Algerian Communication Minister, Naser Mehal, took everyone by surprise when he announced an invitation to the Jewish singer Enrico Macias to visit Algeria, thus lifting the years-long ban on the Algerian-born artist. Macias, slammed in Algeria for his pro-Israel stance, was banned from entering his country of origin twice, once in 2000 and 2007. Both times, massive demonstrations were held to protest his being hosted.

Popular resistance to Macias's visit was more forceful this time and triggered the establishment of a national committee against normalization with Israel. "Algerians are known their dislike of all things Jewish," said political analyst Abdul Aali Razaki. Prominent Algerian activist who goes by the name "Algerie Salah de Londre" posted a video on You Tube slamming the invitation. Razak criticized Mehal for inviting Macias, an action that he labeled "insensitive" and "unethical."

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/07/12/225914.html>

Libyan Jew Jailed in Benghazi - July 31, 2012

Raphael Luzon, a Jew born in Libya, returned to the UK safely after security forces in Benghazi imprisoned and interrogated him for several days.

Luzon said his ordeal began during a personal visit to Benghazi when he received a text warning that security forces were looking for him. "I immediately called the Italian consul who came to my hotel, but when I went to the lobby to meet him he was surrounded by 12 to 15 armed men. They didn't let the consul speak; they put me in the car and took me outside Benghazi."

Luzon, who was in the country for business, was kept behind bars at a military camp outside the Mediterranean city without being told why. After four days in prison, Luzon was freed and kept under house arrest at a friend's residence in Benghazi before he was finally let go.

Source: <http://www.jpost.com/JewishWorld/JewishFeatures/Article.aspx?id=279491>

Editor's Note: This is the second report of a Libyan Jew visiting his former country. David Gerbi, a Jew whose family fled Libya more than four decades ago, visited Tripoli's old Jewish synagogue in Oct, 2011 with big plans. He went to pray and to clean up garbage from a synagogue long left empty.

Thwarting Normal Relations With Jews

Gerbi claimed to have permission for the restoration from the local Muslim cleric and members of the Transitional National Council, the force that ousted Moammar Gadhafi back in August.

After two days, Gerbi was told by men at the scene that they had received warnings he would be targeted by violence and that he should stop his efforts. Spokesman for the Transitional National Council, Jalal el-Galal, said that contrary to Gerbi's claims, he did not have authorization from the TNC to restore the synagogue.

Sources: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/03/libyas-revolutionary-jew-restore-synagogue>
http://www.nbcnews.com/id/44755697/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/#.USch1B2Tzjg

Morocco's Islamists Apologize for Jewish Visitor - July 24, 2012

Morocco's leading political party has apologized for inviting a Jewish man to a gathering of its leaders. At a July congress meeting of Moroccan Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD) leaders, the politburo chief of Hamas, Khaled Meshaal and Jewish activist, Ofer Bronchtein, were both invited to attend. After the July conference, PJD supporters demanded an apology from the party for inviting Bronchtein, due to his Jewish roots, notwithstanding the fact that he founded the International Forum for Peace, located in Paris.

Source: <http://www.moroccotomorrow.org/moroccos-ruling-political-party-apologizes-for-inviting-jew-to-conference/>

Film on Jews of Egypt Causes Uproar - August 10, 2012

"Jews of Egypt," an Egyptian documentary film that records the life of Jews in Egypt before their departure from the country in the 1950s, has stirred controversy after it was screened in a film festival in Cairo. Amir Ramsis, director of the film, was accused of promoting normalization of ties with Israel through attempting to gain the audience's sympathy for Jewish Egyptians, currently seen as Zionists by many Egyptians.

"Those accusations are absolutely groundless," Ramsis told Al Arabiya. "Those who think the film promotes normalization either did not watch it or analyzed it very superficially." It is very obvious, Ramsis explained, that the documentary is against Israel and against normalization.

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/11/243023.html>

Thwarting Normal Relations With Jews

Jewish Yemenis to be Included In Country's National Dialogue Conference – Dec. 19, 2012

Five members of the Jewish community in Yemen have been appointed to the country's National Dialogue Conference. The dialogue conference is part of a power transfer deal following the ousting in February of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who peacefully transferred his power to current President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, who had served as Saleh's long-time deputy. The conference is set to discuss constitutional reforms that would open the door to elections for president and parliament in 2014.

Rabbi Yahiya Yusuf, spiritual leader of Yemeni Jews, told the Yemen Times that the inclusion of Yemeni Jews in the conference shows that the country is committed to equality for people of all backgrounds. The Jewish community of Yemen now numbers some 130, with 50 living in the capital Sana'a in a compound secured by the government, and the remainder in Raydah, according to the Jewish Agency. Attacks on Jews in Yemen by Islamist extremists have increased in recent years.

Source: <http://www.jta.org/news/article/2012/12/19/3114946/jewish-yemenis-included-in-countrys-national-dialogue-conference>

Update: *Yemenite Jews Excluded From National Dialogue Conference-March 24/13*

SANA'A -- The Jewish community was denied participation in Yemen's National Dialogue Conference (NDC) which opened last week after lengthy delays, despite promises that they would be represented at the conference, aimed at deciding the country's future.

The opening day of the conference last week was declared a public holiday, allowing Yemenis to better follow the talks, expected to last at least six months, on radio and television.

The Jewish community had little to celebrate, however, after being completely excluded from representation among the conference's 565 delegates. "We were shocked when we found out that we were excluded from participation in the NDC, especially after we had been promised by the government to be represented by five delegates," Jewish community leader Rabbi Yahya Yousef Mosa.

Source: http://themedialine.org/news/print_news_detail.asp?NewsID=37367

Thwarting Normal Relations With Jews

Jew Vetoed As Tourism Minister in Tunisia - December 23, 2012

Members of the Ennahda Islamist party in Tunisia have exercised its veto power to prevent the appointment of Rene Trabelsi, the Jewish director of Royal First Travel, as Tunisian Minister for Tourism. The appointment was suggested by Prime Minister Hamadi Jebali. The objective would be to show that the Islamist government is open to the outside world.

But radicals in his own party rejected the idea that the Tourism portfolio should go to “a Jew”.

Source: <http://harissa.com/news/article/minist%C3%A8re-du-tourisme-jebali-propose-un-juif-tunisien-ennahdha-soppose>

Muslim Brotherhood Official Calls for Jews to Return to Egypt; then Islamic Jihad Calls for Death to Returning Jews - December 27, 2012

A senior official from the Muslim Brotherhood said Jews should return to Egypt. Essam el-Erian, an advisor to the Egyptian president, was quoted as having said during an interview... He added that Jews should return to Egypt to "make way for the Palestinian people" and said, "Every Egyptian has the right to come back to Egypt, no matter what his religion.

Erian's remarks were criticized by Egyptian users on social media networks, who called Erian "an agent of Israel and America" and accused him of treason.

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/12/30/257796.html>

Update: Islamic Jihad calls for the resignation of Erian and Vows to Kill Jews who Return to Egypt – January 4, 2013

The Islamic Jihad has called on the Muslim Brotherhood's Essam el-Erian to resign from his role as adviser to Morsi and to apologize to the Egyptian people for his statement asking Egyptian Jews to leave Israel and reclaim their properties back at home. “They will destroy the economy and foment sedition. Their return will be over our dead bodies.”

Reaction to El-Erian's statements was furious. “We shall fight them vigorously if they return, especially the Egyptian-Israeli Jews,” said Mohamed Abou Samra, the leading figure in the Islamic Jihad movement. “Islamic Shariah says they deserve to be killed,” he told the Egypt Independent.

Source: http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=6958

Thwarting Normal Relations With Jews

Further Update: Senior Egyptian Official Who 'Invited Jews 'Back Home' Resigns - January 7, 2013

Essam el-Erian, a top advisor to Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi, has resigned from his position, Egyptian media reported Sunday. Although the report said that el-Arian had willingly made the decision because he was “occupied with other work,” analysts said that there was no doubt that he was pressure to quit – after inviting back to Egypt the descendants of Jews who were thrown out of the country, or who fled due to anti-Semitic violence.

Source: <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/163955#.UO7asLaLlx->

Egyptian TV Airs Interview Detailing Arrests and Expulsions of Jews – Jan 2, 2013

Last month, Egyptian TV BALADNA interviewed Prof. Khaled Fahmy, Professor of History at the American University in Cairo, on the history of Jews in Egypt. During the 40 minute interview, Prof. Fahmy underscored the following:

- Overall, Jews contributed greatly to the development of Egypt in the 19 and 20 century, to the economy, industry and the culture of Egypt;
- The Moslem Brotherhood begun persecuting Jews and burning synagogues as early as 1945. In June and September of 1948, bombs exploded in the Jewish quarter of Cairo killing many Jews; rioters burnt down hundreds of stores owned by Jews, etc.
- In May of 1948, 800 Egyptian Jews were arrested and their assets confiscated. (Editor's Note: Prof. Mikhael Laskier, in his book, *"The Jews of Egypt"*, writes that 1600 Egyptian Jews were arrested and imprisoned for 16 to 18 months, then expelled with their families);
- Prof. Fahmy recognized that 460 Jews bearing Egyptian identity were arrested and expelled, together with French, British and others. (Ed. Note: Prof. Laskier reports higher figures but, for the first time, such expulsions are cited publicly in the Egyptian media);
- Prof. Fahmy said that all the Jews were fired from their jobs in governmental and public companies in 1956, and since then, the stateless and foreign Jews were persecuted by governmental agencies, until they left.

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bgquuxr1brY>

Moroccan King Assists in Refurbishing Jewish Cemeteries – March 15, 2012

An effort to rehabilitate and renovate Jewish cemeteries and sacred sites in Morocco is taking place, with assistance and recognition being provided by the King of Morocco.

Rabbi Raphael Benchimol, an orthodox Rabbi of the Manhattan Sephardic Congregation, was decorated in New York with the Knight of the Order of the Throne from Mohammed VI King of Morocco for his assistance in the project to rehabilitate Jewish cemeteries in Morocco. The ceremony was held at the Centre for Jewish History in downtown Manhattan, and was attended by dignitaries, including Ambassador of the King of Morocco, Serge Berdugo, and Moroccan Ambassador to the United States, Rachad Bouhlal.

Source: <http://www.algemeiner.com/2012/03/15/moroccan-king-awards-rabbi-with-prestigious-order-of-the-throne-award/>

A Jewish Synagogue Makes a Comeback in Lebanon - April 5, 2012

The Magen Abraham synagogue is the last Jewish place of worship to survive in Beirut, a lone reminder that a few decades ago a thriving Jewish community lived in the city center. Restoration began two years ago and was funded by donations from Lebanese Jews both in Lebanon and overseas. The interior has been restored to its original décor with sky-blue walls, arched windows, and whitewashed columns with small brown painted streaks. Work is expected to be completed by summer.

Source: http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2012/0329/A-Jewish-synagogue-makes-a-comeback-in-Lebanon?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+feeds%2Fworld+%28Christian+Science+Monitor+|+World%29

10 Years after Bombing, Tunisian President Visits Djerba - April 11, 2012

Tunisia's president was joined by the country's grand rabbi in marking the 10th anniversary of an al-Qaeda truck bomb at a synagogue on the island of Djerba that killed 21 people.

President Moncef Marzouki flew to the island accompanied by Tunisia's grand rabbi, Haim Bitan, to lay a wreath and observe a moment of silence to remember the victims of the truck bombing, that included 14 German and two French tourists. The ambassadors of France and Germany were scheduled to be in attendance, along with the families of the victims.

Source: <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4215182,00.html>

Thousands of Jewish Pilgrims Pray In Morocco - May 12, 2012

Thousands of Jews from Morocco, Israel and other parts of the world have over the past week, carried out an annual pilgrimage to the Islamic nation to honor celebrated rabbis. Perhaps the most famous of these burial grounds is that of Amran Ben Diwan, a venerated rabbi who was interred 250 years ago in the mountains of Ouazzane, about 200 kilometers north of the capital Rabat. Ben Diwan's tomb, nestled in a Jewish cemetery among acres of olive trees, was placed under police guard and only people who had been authorized by Morocco's Jewish community were allowed access.

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/05/12/213700.html>

Jewish Delegation Receives Moroccan Royal Welcome - August 9, 2012

A delegation from Israel visited Morocco and met with high-echelon politicians. The delegation was headed by Sam Ben-Sheetrit, Chairman of World Federation of Moroccan Jews. The entire mission took part in events celebrating the 13th anniversary of the ascension of King Mohammed VI to the royal throne. Ben-Sheetrit and his friends were invited by the King after an exchange of messages was mediated by Moroccan Foreign Minister Taieb Fassi Fihri.

Source: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/08/a-moroccan-royal-welcome.html>

Iraqi Muslim Speaks Up For Jews at Conference - December 13, 2012

An Iraqi Muslim has spoken out for Iraqi Jews during a November conference in the Kurdish city of Suleimaniya which assembled all religions and sects except the Jews. Despite initial attempts to silence him, Nabil al-Hadairi, a writer, received a standing ovation when he addressed the conference, which included ministers and international media. He spoke about Iraqi-Jews in history dating back to Babylonian times 3000 years ago.

Hadairi managed to write three articles of the Conference communiqué, stating the importance of correcting the Constitution by recognizing Judaism as an official religion alongside Islam, Christianity and others.

Source: <http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.co.uk/2012/12/iraqi-muslim-speaks-for-jews-at.html>

Moroccan Minister Seeks To Preserve Former Jewish Schools – Dec. 21, 2012

The Moroccan government announced plans to preserve and renovate buildings that once served as Jewish schools.

The Muslim nation's education minister, Mohamed El Ouafa, presented the plan at a meeting in Rabat with Marc Eisenberg, president of the Alliance Jewish education network. The first phase of the plan is to place plaques in front of each of the buildings, according to the French-language Moroccan newspaper Le Matin. The minister said the plan would "allow present and future generations to learn about the shared history the Jewish and Muslim communities of Morocco and the cohesion between those two communities."

Source: <http://www.jta.org/news/article/2012/12/21/3115141/moroccan-minister-seeks-to-preserve-buildings-that-served-as-jewish-schools>