



Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries

Jews are an indigenous people of the Middle East having lived in the region continuously for millennia, fully one thousand five hundred years before the advent of Islam.

Occurring in the latter part of the 20th century, the breadth and scale of the near-total displacement of Jews from eleven Muslim countries ranks among the more significant cases of mass displacement in modern history.

For over 75 years, the world has ignored some 1,000,000 Jews uprooted from the totalitarian regimes, dictatorships and monarchies of Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Morocco Yemen and Aden, as well as Iran. Today, less than 1% of those Jews remain. Most fled to Israel, the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people for thousands of years.

The legitimate call to secure rights and redress for Jewish refugees from Arab countries is not to negate the suffering or the rights of Palestinian refugees. Their claims, however, do not supersede the fact that Palestinians were not the only Middle East refugees.

For peace in the Middle East, truth and justice must prevail.

To that end, eleven Country Reports have been prepared to document the history and heritage, as well as the individual and communal assets lost by Jews displaced from 10 Arab countries and Iran. The first Report, on the Jews of Syria, will be released on Dec. 23, 2024.

In the spirit of the Abraham Accords, at a time of historic breakthroughs in political and financial ties between Muslim countries and Israel/Jews, the time has come for nations to unite in promoting peace and reconciliation among all peoples in the Region.

The Jewish Community of Syria

Syria hosted one of the oldest Jewish communities in the Middle East, with roots tracing back over 2,5000 years. Archaeological evidence demonstrates a continuous presence of Jews in major cities like Damascus and Aleppo. In 1948, there were 30,000 Jews in Syria.

Driven out by continuous state-sponsored persecution and discriminatory policies in the latter part of the 20th century, the Syrian Jewish community was effectively eliminated. Today, four Jews remain in Syria.