

**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.)

Farhud massacre (Iraq - 1941)

How Sarah witnessed the Farhud in Baghdad

6 May 2021

<https://www.jewishrefugees.org.uk/2021/05/how-sarah-witnessed-farhud-in-baghdad.html>

It is 80 years since the outbreak of the *Farhud* massacre shocked Iraqi Jews to the core. Sarah was an 11-year-old nanny from Kurdistan living in Baghdad who witnessed the *Farhud*. Dorota Molin tells her story in *Times of Israel*:

“My paternal uncle lived in Baghdad. He didn’t have children, so he asked my father to ‘adopt’ one of his. I was the eldest one and my father loved me very much, he said ‘pick any one except for Sarah.’

But my uncle still asked for me. My father couldn’t refuse him, that would harm his honour in our community.

So aged 11, I left my family and went down to Baghdad to stay with my uncle.

I was living with him and his wife but in the end, I got bored. I told them I wanted to work.

They took me to a house where I took care of a child, a baby. Afterwards I was brought to care for an elderly Jewish woman.

Three or four months later, the Farhud broke out, they started killing people. Earlier, they had already began beating Jews in the streets and robbing them.

Eventually, the Farhud broke out, on the Eve of the Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost). They went out and started killing people. They would break into houses at night to rob and kill.

They discussed this at the house of my mistress.

‘A certain man has been killed, what shall we do?’ But they couldn’t do anything, so they just hid in the house. In Baghdad, there were also Muslims who loved the Jews.

Such Muslims would help their Jewish neighbours by writing on their neighbours’ doors ‘this house is Muslim’. If a house had this sign, the rioters wouldn’t touch it. But if a house didn’t have such a sign, they would break in and kill those who were inside.

They would bang on the door with rifles, the door opened, they entered and killed whoever was inside. This went on from the night until the next day, two in the afternoon. So to protect us from this, our Muslim neighbours put a sign on my mistress’ house.

I watched them painted this sign on our door but I didn’t understand what was going on, I was just a little child.

The next day in the afternoon, my mistress told me ‘go, get us some bread.’

In Arabic, they call it sammun.

Here in Israel, they call them lakhmanyot. ‘Bring us three bread rolls so that we can eat.’ I didn’t understand what was going on so I went to the bakery, bought some rolls and started walking back.

Then I saw two men on the street, one was saying to the other ‘See this girl? Kill her, she’s a Jewess.’

‘No way, today Jews don’t go out to roam about in the streets.’

‘I tell you, she is a Jew. Kill her.’

‘No, she can’t be, Jews dress fashionably, they are modern. This one is a poor child, not a wealthy Jew!’

But the other says ‘kill her!’

‘I will not kill her.’

In the meantime, I tried to stay calm. By the grace of God, I didn’t run away, walking slowly, as if unintimidated by them. In the end, they went their way and I made it back to my mistress’ house, shaking from head to foot.

I told her about this incident and she exclaimed ‘oh, you are yellow! Drink some sweet water!’ She gave me water with sugar and I drank.

The next day, they started killing again. First, they roamed the streets and killed any Jews they could find.

But at noon, they even started breaking into houses using rifles and killing people indoors. I went up to the roof to watch what was happening in the streets. I was little, I didn’t understand it. There in Iraq, the houses had flat roofs you could sit on, so I sat there. I saw some people carrying bundles with clothes—possessions they had stolen from Jewish homes.

They would come with cars, loot Jewish homes and fill their vehicles with the stolen possessions, taking even the furniture.

Then one man approached one of those who were carrying the bundles saying ‘give these things to me or I’ll kill you.’

The other replied ‘I won’t give them to you. These houses are full, go get some for yourself.’

Then someone called from inside our house. ‘Come down from the roof!’ But I said ‘No, I want to see.’

So I stayed, watching the men outside argue. ‘Why would you kill me?’ one of them said. ‘Go, get some possessions for yourself.’

But—what shall we do—the other man did kill him, in front of my very eyes. He killed him and took the stolen possessions from him.