

**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)

Documents cast light on Jewish life in Silwan

29 October 2021

<https://www.jewishrefugees.org.uk/2021/10/documents-cast-light-on-jewish-life-in-silwan.html>

Original documents have come to light which cast light on life in Kfar Shiloah (Silwan). The village, outside the Jerusalem city walls, was settled by Yemenite Jews in the 19th

century, but the residents were evacuated in 1938 by the British following riots and were prevented from coming back. *The Jewish Press* reports (with thanks: Michelle):

The newly discovered documents were part of an estate left by Mazal Cohen, a member of the Tabib family, a Palmach fighter who was a candidate to light a beacon in 2017 during Israel's 69th Independence Day. They were handed over by her son Ronen Cohen to Gadi Bashari, Chairman of the Kfar HaShiloach Public Council and member of the board of directors of the Zionist Archives.

Cohen recalled that while taking care of his late mother in her last months, he came across "a swollen bag of yellowing documents folded together."

"Slowly, I separated the pile of documents, which included pictures that shed light on the story of the Tabib family in the Jewish village of Shiloach and the community life there. This revelation connected me and my family to my grandparents and the Yemenite community of Olim, who came among the pioneers of the First Aliyah and settled in the Shiloach village," he explained.

One of the documents is Mazal's birth certificate, signed by the Yemenite village's Mukhtar (Head of the village) Aharon Maliach. Another document has details regarding the family's tax payments to the village committee and to the British Mandate's government.

Another document, from 1942, is a confirmation from Maliach, apparently to be presented to the British police who prevented the Yemenite Jews from entering the village after its evacuation in 1938. The confirmation was given to Mazal's father, Shlomo Tabib, who wanted to enter the village to dismantle iron and wooden planks from his house to use them as construction materials.

Another document from 1951 attests to the existence of an ancient Yemenite Torah scroll that Shlomo Tabib brought with him from Aden, Yemen, and passed it to a member of his family who also came from Yemen in those years, to care for and preserve.

Copies of the documents will be transferred to the Public Council archives and will be displayed in the visitors' center of the ancient Ohel Shlomo synagogue, in the Shiloach village.

Bashari said excitedly that "for decades, these documents have been kept in the home of the deceased. These many testimonies of the Jewish life in the village are so thrilling, since they renew, in the most tangible way, the connection between the two generations: the original residents of Kfar Hashiloach and us, who follow in their footsteps and continue their way and their heritage."

The documents "will reveal to the future generations many new aspects of the story of the village that existed at the foot of the City of David and the Old City of Jerusalem," he said,

Cohen expressed hope that the documents, “which are written in the curly Rashi script, and some of which I have not yet deciphered, can reveal to others another piece of the story of this amazing community, and pay them the respect that they deserve.”