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נתן שרנסקי
יו"ר ההנהלה

Natan Sharansky
Chairman of the
Executive

To Whom It My Concern:

I write to support the work of JIMENA (Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa), which tells the story of Mizrahi Jews, who lived continuously in the Middle East for over 2,500 years until they were brutally uprooted from the Arab countries. Today, 60% of these Jewish refugees, known as the “forgotten refugees” of the Middle East and North Africa, have been absorbed by Israel. They and their descendants comprise over half of Israel’s Jewish population.

This is a fundamental chapter in the history of the Jewish people. It must be acknowledged and studied in depth for the continuity of Jewish tradition.

Over the past dozen years, the story of the forgotten refugees has become even more relevant than before, as Israel's supporters battle BDS and anti-Israel rhetoric on college campuses and beyond. The efforts to educate students and the public on this little-known chapter are helping to add nuance, balance, and perspective to the often distorted discourse surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is why JIMENA is an important neutralizer to BDS messaging. The history of

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850,000 indigenous Jewish refugees from Arab countries must be wholeheartedly integrated into students' Jewish worldview and Israel advocacy as an effective counterbalance to absurd BDS claims of Israel as a "white, colonialist, apartheid" society.

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I commend JIMENA's speakers for sharing their personal stories on over 100 campuses and I encourage campus organizations to collaborate with JIMENA and reach new audiences.

Thank you for your invaluable work.

Sincerely,



Natan Sharansky

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