



Mizrahi Remembrance Month

HONORING THE FORGOTTEN REFUGEES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 2, 2015

San Francisco Reception to Honor Jewish Refugees from the Middle East and North Africa

**With: A personal account by Israel's Deputy Consul General to the Pacific Northwest,
Ravit Baer, remarks by Israel's Consul General to the Pacific Northwest, Andy David
& Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs exhibit:
*"The Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries"***

**Sunday, December 6, 2015
4:30PM welcome and remarks
5:15 Hannukah Candle lighting
5:30-7:00PM reception**

**Magain David Sephardim Congregation
351 4th Ave, San Francisco, CA 94118
RSVP at info@jimena.org**

San Francisco – On June 23, 2014 the Government of Israel adopted a law, which designates November 30th as an annual, national day of commemoration for the 850,000 Jewish refugees who were displaced from Arab countries and Iran in the 20th century. The law, which is the culmination of several years of hard work and dedication by an international team of Mizrahi Justice advocates, entails commemoration events and the inclusion of Mizrahi history into schools' curriculum.

JIMENA: Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa, a nonprofit that seeks universal recognition of the Mizrahi refugee experience and heritage, is planning a range of educational and cultural programs throughout North America during the months of November and December to honor of the November 30th Day of Commemoration. On December 6th, San Francisco will be hosting a special Hanukah themed reception to commemorate the event.

The program will begin with Israel's Deputy Consul General to the Pacific Northwest, Ravit Baer sharing anecdotes of her family's Kurdish-Jewish experience, and Consul General, Andy David will provide a synopsis of the efforts taking place in Israel to ensure that Mizrahi and Sephardic heritage and history is learned.

Following these remarks, Rabbi, Simon Benzaquen will lead participants in a Hanukkah candle lighting ceremony. Known as the "Rapping Rabbi of Seattle," Spanish-Moroccan, Rabbi Benzaquen is committed to preserving and perpetuating our unique Sephardic traditions. In May, 2015 he told the Daily Forward, "'I see a lot of responsibility to show the new generation that we can speak something that belongs to us. That's our heritage. We're Sephardic: The prayers aren't enough, we need to know the meaning."

Following the candle lighting, Israel's Deputy Consul General to the Pacific Northwest, Ravit Baer will share anecdotes of her family's Kurdish-Jewish, and will provide a synopsis of the efforts taking place in Israel to ensure that Mizrahi and Sephardic heritage and history is learned.

The reception will be held in the social hall of Magain David, where participants will be able to view *The Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries* panel-exhibit, eat Sephardic Hanukah treats and celebrate the Festival of Lights together. The first Sephardic synagogue in San Francisco, Magain David was founded in 1935 to serve a diverse community of Jews from Sephardic and Mizrahi background. Today it is a center for prayer and learning in accordance with Sephardic practices and traditions, with its daily prayer services and events open to people of all backgrounds.

Hosted by





JIMENA: Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa

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