



## PRESS RELEASE

### Palestinians were not the only Middle East refugees

### First-Ever Hearing of the Italian Parliament on Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries follows Netanyahu Statement, Libyan leader Moammar Gheddafi's visit to Rome

Contact: Stanley Urman [info@justiceforjews.com](mailto:info@justiceforjews.com). (917) 640-8028

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK (June 22, 2009) - In a landmark international development, the first-ever Hearing of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Italian *Chamber of Deputies* addressed the subject of Jewish refugees from Arab countries.

Testifying at the Hearing was Canadian Member of Parliament and former Justice Minister, the Honorable **Irwin Cotler** who stated that: "*The time has come to return Jewish refugees from Arab countries to the Middle East narrative from which they have been expunged these past sixty years.*" He added, "*This is not just a case of justice delayed, but justice denied.*"

This Hearing followed the much-anticipated foreign policy speech given by Israeli Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu** on June 14, 2009 wherein he reminded the world of the "*hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees who left their homes and belongings in Arab countries.*"

**Moshe Kantor**, President of the *European Jewish Congress* stated that, "*The forgotten story of the forced exodus of Jewish refugees from Arab states must be on the agenda during any Middle East peace talks. Many of these refugees built their new homes in European communities. We therefore call upon the European institutions, and upon European governments to raise their voice and demand that historical justice be done. We commend the Italian Parliament for addressing this issue in a serious manner and encourage other states in Europe to do so as well.*"

Cotler emphasized that, "*The displacement of 850,000 Jews from Arab countries is not just a 'Forgotten Exodus' but a 'Forced Exodus.'* He called on the need to expose "*the pernicious and prejudicial role played by the U.N. in excluding Jewish refugees from Arab countries from the justice and peace agenda*" and discussed the role that Italy could play in seeking to resolve issues affecting all Middle East refugees.

Also testifying at the Hearing was Prof. **David Meghnagi**, Chair of the *International Master on Holocaust Studies* at *Roma Tre University*, who spoke of his family's harrowing escape from Libya.

The Hearing was held coincident with the *Assembly of Jewish Leaders* convened by *Justice for Jews from Arab Countries*, in partnership with the *European Jewish Fund* and included 30 delegates from nine countries in Europe and abroad.

The recent visit to Italy of Libyan leader **Moammar Gheddafi** was discussed at the Opening Session, attended by the leaders of the representatives of various organizations of Libyan Jewry based in Italy, Israel, and the United Kingdom. The attached/linked '[Statement of Principles](#)' was unanimously adopted by the Assembly, detailing the principles that must govern any negotiations with Libya and/or other Arab states on the rights of Jewish refugees from Arab countries.

The message that Jewish refugees are now a 'core issue' to the Middle-East peace process was recently reinforced by Israel's new ambassador to the United States. In an interview with *Reuters* on June 16, 2009, Ambassador **Michael Oren** contended that: "*The refugee issue, both the Palestinian refugee issue, as well as the Jewish refugee issue -- the Jews who were forced out of Arab lands -- those are core issues.*"





[Forward email](#)

 **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to [info@justiceforjews.com](mailto:info@justiceforjews.com) by [info@justiceforjews.com](mailto:info@justiceforjews.com).  
Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Justice for Jews from Arab Countries | JJAC c/o CJH 15 West 16th St. (6th FL.) | New York | NY | 10011