

To the Leaders of Libyan Jamahiriya

➤ Honourable Leaders,

We invite you to consider the following history in the form of an open letter:

- **Thirty-seven years have passed** since the pogrom occurred against the indigenous and ancient population of the Jews in Benghazi & Tripoli. Jewish properties were destroyed, many people were wounded and three were killed. (Together with the two Families, 16).
- **Thirty-seven years have passed** since that evening of June 7, when an officer from the Libyan army, Mustafa El Gritli, rounded up two the Luzon & Rakah families in the city of Tripoli, claiming that they were going to a safe haven; a refugee camp “for protection”. The members of that family have disappeared. For many years the Libyan government merely declared them “missing persons”. We have proof and witnesses that the families were taken to an area outside of Tripoli and massacred in cold blood.
- **Thirty-seven years have passed** since the massacre of my family: Uncle Shalom Luzon (49), his wife Zakya (40), and their six children: the eldest one was 19 and the youngest 2 years old.
- **For thirty-seven years, we have been awaiting justice.** For all those years, we have been yearning to bury those eight bodies according to Jewish religious law so that the graves can receive our tears and the dead be honoured.
- **Yet, for thirty-seven years none of the surviving family has said one negative thing about the Libyan Government. Quite the contrary: we continue to affirm our deep feelings for Libya and still believe that we will receive justice at its hands.**
- **Thirty-five years have passed** since the Revolution lead by Colonel Moammar Khaddafi.
- **Thirty-three years have passed** since Colonel Khaddafi made the promise and passed into law a mandate stating that, within 20 years, the dispossessed Jews of Libya will be compensated for their lost property and their dead.
- Thus, **fourteen years have passed since the target date** when the Jews of Libya were to be compensated for their property according to the Libyan law.
- **Twelve years have passed** since my late wife, Fiammetta (33), died from brain cancer. **She would have lived longer if we had the money taken from us.**
- **Ten years have passed** since my Father, Quintino Mamos Luzon (69) died, needing a kidney transplant, which we were unable to pay for, despite the fact that he was once one of the wealthiest Jews in Benghazi before 1967. **He would have lived till now if we had the money taken from us.**

- **One year has passed** since I have initiated contact with several officials with close ties to the Libyan government in our search for human justice, our rights and to request an opportunity to visit our childhood home.

...We are still waiting...

- ❖ We were very happy when we heard and read the declarations of Mr Saef El Islam Khaddafi regarding the rights of the Jews of Libya and his invitation to the Jews to return.
- ❖ We were very happy to witness the profound positive transformation of Libya in the past year.
- ❖ We were very happy to learn of the Libyan commitment on nuclear weapons proliferation.
- ❖ We are very happy that Mr Khaddafi is going to celebrate 35 years of power.

...Yet, we are in anguish.

- **Because, until now, no one has fulfilled any promises.**
- **Our silence of the past conceals a long overdue reckoning with regards to our rights. We can no longer remain silent.**
- **We are examining the avenues open to us, including all international forums, press conferences, and calling upon activist groups such as Amnesty International, the International Red Cross, the United Nations, the European Union, and the International Court of Haj.**
- **Because our dead are NOT of less value than the victims of Lockerby, Berlin or France!**

Nevertheless:

**We still feel to be children of Libya in all aspects of our life.
We still speak Libyan Arabic, we eat Libyan food and we practice Libyan customs and traditions.
We define ourselves as "Libyan Jews".
We feel part of Libya.**

We entreat you to end this controversy. Please examine our history and claims, and allow justice to prevail. We want to proclaim to the world that Libya is moral, just, and fair.



Raphael N. Luzon