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HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF JEWS FROM EGYPT

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Your Excellency,

We, Jews from Egypt residing in the United States, wish to welcome you to our country. We wish you well on your visit with President Obama. If Nasser had not persecuted us, stolen all our property, and expelled us ignominiously with only the shirts on our backs, we would still be living in Egypt and contributing to its greatness as we always have. Indeed, we care about our heritage and cherish it openly. It will be a good day when Egypt finally recognizes our many positive contributions to its history. Sadly, it does not appear this day is near.

We wish to bring to your attention, again, as we have many times in the past, a number of grievances. So far, not only have they not been satisfied, but they have not even been addressed. The Egyptian establishment believes that if they just ignore us, we will simply go away.

1. Why is Egypt refusing us access to our communal archives, our records, our religious court decisions, our libraries, or even allow us to scan them for computer storage? They are the massive evidence of a significant Jewish presence in Egypt, unbroken since the dawn of time. Is this what you don't want the world to know about?
2. Why is Egypt denying our request to relocate our Torah scrolls and religious artifacts? They belong to us. We paid for them. Your government has confiscated them and stored them in poor conditions, which will hasten their deterioration. Your government decreed that they are part of the Egyptian heritage, by placing them under your Department of Antiquities, on a par with the Sphinx and the Pyramids. Antiquities! When only a generation ago they were used in daily services, as intended by the families who paid for them! What is the difference between this and highway robbery?
3. Why did Egypt refuse to allow a group of seventy elderly Jews to enter Egypt to

visit their old synagogues and neighborhoods?

4. Why are many of our synagogues trashed and in ruins?

5. Why are you insisting that your culture minister, Farouk Hosni, be appointed head of UNESCO, an institution devoted to the spread of knowledge and education in the world, after he scandalously declared that he would burn any books by Israelis (read: Jews) found in Egypt?

Sir, we are not going away. We will continue to press our demands until they are addressed.

Sincerely,

Historical Society of Jews From Egypt