



London summit focuses on plight of Jewish refugees from Arab states

20:09 23/06/2008

Jewish groups from around the world are meeting in London to highlight the plight of Jews who were forced to flee from Arab nations in 1948 when the state of Israel was founded, the British BBC website reported Monday.

The conference is organized by the American-based group "Justice for Jews," which aims to "ensure that justice for Jews from Arab countries assumes its rightful place on the international political agenda and their rights be secured as a matter of law and equity." The group says some 850,000 Jews lived in Arab nations before Israel was founded and that most were forced to flee due to hostility.

The group, which campaigns for compensation for Jewish refugees, says that the international community has placed a lot of emphasis on the plight of the Palestinian refugees, ignoring their Jewish counterparts. The Justice for Jews coalition numbers 77 organizations from 20 countries around the globe.

The BBC reported that the conference is highly controversial because the number of Jewish refugees and the conditions under which they left their home countries are disputed.

The conference includes addresses by Holocaust historian Sir Martin Gilbert and former Canadian Justice Minister and Attorney General Irwin Cotler.

The conference was to conclude on June 25.