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ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Letter dated 21 August 1972 from the Permanent Representative of
Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions of my Government, I have the honour to draw your attention to a new repressive measure decreed by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics against Jews who desire to reunite with their families and their people in Israel.

New regulations recently promulgated by the Soviet authorities impose so exorbitant a tax on those who wish to leave the country that they virtually deprive Jews of their fundamental human right to do so.

Until the beginning of 1971 the fee for an exit visa from the Soviet Union for Israel was 40 rubles. Since then every prospective emigrant has been charged 940 rubles, consisting of 440 rubles for the exit visa and 500 rubles for the required renunciation of Soviet citizenship, i.e. a total of \$US 1,128.

Under the new regulations, an emigrant with academic education must pay an additional surcharge which ranges from \$US 4,800 for liberal-arts graduates to \$US 26,400 for holders of a Ph.D. degree.

The earnings of individuals in the aforesaid categories in the Soviet Union are 120-300 rubles (\$133-\$330) a month. It is, therefore, obvious that the new regulations are a grave blow to the possibility of such persons exercising their right to leave the Soviet Union.

Moreover, Jewish citizens of the Soviet Union who apply for permission to emigrate, especially if they belong to the aforementioned categories, are generally dismissed from their work and assigned to menial tasks.

* A/8760.

The tenacious efforts of Soviet Jews to vindicate their rights as Jews are one of the most epic struggles for human rights of our time. This struggle has earned the support of Governments, international organizations, public figures and general world opinion. The latest measures of oppression and discrimination are not only contrary to the tenets of the United Nations Charter and international law but contravene the principles to which the Soviet Union itself proclaims adherence.

The international community cannot remain silent in the face of this new violation of the basic human rights of Soviet Jews. It is hoped that the Soviet Government will hearken to the voice of humaneness and justice and revoke the iniquitous impositions.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 50 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Yosef TEKOAH
Permanent Representative of Israel
to the United Nations
