

Mr Savvas Angelides

Minister of Defence
1432 Nicosia, Cyprus

Brussels, 14 December 2018

Dear Minister Angelides,

It is with surprise and deep disappointment that our friends and colleagues in the Jewish Community in Cyprus, through the office of the Chief Rabbi, inform me that they have been presented with a bill for over 5000 Euro for policing the recent Chanukah celebrations that took place in Nicosia on December 5th and at which there were an estimated 500 participants.

Chanukah is a joyous celebration of overcoming hardship and tribulations, a time of miracles and the important of spreading light in the darkest days. In these days of rising anti-Semitism and xenophobia across Europe, the message is an important one.

You can imagine the insult and bad taste in the mouth felt by the Jewish community when the bill (attached) from the police was presented.

As the Chairman of the European Jewish Association I am well used to dealing and responding to challenging situations. But this decision to charge the Jewish population for their own security marks a new low, and one that I sincerely hope was a clerical mistake or administrative oversight on behalf of the police.

I take the opportunity to remind you Minister that EU member states have only this week pledged to do all that they can to make the Jewish Community in Europe feel at home, and to re-double their efforts to tackle the security concerns, sense of isolation and rising prejudice against them.

It is with great sadness and disappointment that I must say that this decision to charge the Jewish Community for their Chanukah celebration is as far removed from this pledge as it is possible to get.

I ask you respectfully to immediately write off the bill, and re-assure the Jewish community in Cyprus, that they will be afforded the same security and protection afforded to their brothers and sisters elsewhere in Europe, and provided for by Member states governments, without charges, fees or invoices following Jewish events and holidays. Indeed, there were many Chanukah events all over Europe in which the local police offered protected - as they do at any public event - and this is the first time we hear that the police asking to be paid for doing their job. I look forward to your reply and urgent clarification on this matter.

Yours faithfully,



Rabbi Menachem Margolin

Chairman