



Sydney Assor:

“The Jewish Communities in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia”

### **Summary**

Sydney Assor, head of the Moroccan Jewish Community in Britain, called Moroccan Jewry "a shining example for successful coexistence between Jews and Muslims."

Speaking at the conference, which focused on the Future of Religious Minorities in the Middle East, North Africa and the Two Sudans, Assor recalled personal experiences as a member of a religious minority in a Muslim country and spoke of the 5,000 Jews living in Morocco today, who are considered an integral part of Moroccan society.

Assor recalled that he never had trouble defining his identity as a Moroccan Jew while living in Morocco, and that real persecution in his lifetime took place only during the Vichy epoch. Assor said he was confronted with prejudice when he moved to England, mostly by fellow Jews, who considered Moroccan Jews uneducated, politically immature and socially inept.

Assor conceded that the Jewish community did have its struggles in Morocco just as anywhere else, but declared that contemporary Moroccan reality includes Jews enjoying full civic rights and shared civic dignity. Assor attributed this fact to the inclusive policy pursued by Kings Mohammed V, Hassan II and Mohammed VI of Morocco.