



May 8th, 2026

Iyar 21, 5786

World Jewish Congress
the American Sephardi Federation
the Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America

Dear Friends,

I am writing regarding your organization's partnering with the Embassy of Spain in the United States for the May 6 event, "The Golden Age of the Jews of Al-Andalus".

As the Ambassador of the State of Israel, the nation-state of the Jewish people, I found your partnership in this event both surprising and deeply disappointing given the Spanish government's ongoing and aggressive campaign against the State of Israel and, increasingly, against the Jewish people more broadly.

In recent years, Spain's leadership, foremost among them Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and members of his government, has repeatedly promoted deeply hostile rhetoric toward Israel. They have leveled the libelous charges of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and starvation, against the Jewish state, while publicly calling for Israeli officials to face international prosecution. Spain has also positioned itself at the forefront of efforts within the European Union to isolate Israel politically, economically, and culturally through embargoes, boycotts, and the suspension of bilateral agreements.

This sustained campaign of delegitimization has had real consequences. Antisemitism in Spain has risen dramatically. According to the Observatory of Antisemitism, incidents of violent antisemitism in Spain increased by 321% in 2024 compared to 2023, and by 567% compared to 2022. Jewish communities in Spain are increasingly expressing fear and insecurity about openly identifying as Jewish.



As it fosters and spreads antisemitism, the Spanish government has sought to use programs and events centered on Jewish history and culture to rehabilitate its public image within the Jewish world. Against this backdrop, participation in such an event risks lending legitimacy to a government that is actively working to isolate and vilify the world's only Jewish state.

Spain, under the government of PM Sánchez, is not a first. History has repeatedly shown that there are those willing to celebrate Jewish heritage and memory while turning their backs on living Jews. The Jewish people cannot afford to ignore that contradiction, particularly at a moment when Israel faces unprecedented international hostility and antisemitism, which is once again surging globally.

I have no doubt that the rise of antisemitism is also of deep concern to you, and it is precisely for that reason that I am writing to you. At this critical time in Israel's history, the Jewish people must stand shoulder to shoulder. We all bear a responsibility to speak clearly and unapologetically against campaigns aimed at delegitimizing the Israel and Jewish people.

Respectfully,

Yechiel (Michael) Leiter, PhD.

Ambassador of Israel to the United States