

‘Brothers and Sisters, the Gates of Jerusalem Are Open to You’

Anti-Semitism in France is not a new phenomenon. Last year saw more than 600 attacks on Jewish residents, nearly twice as many as the previous year.

French Jews tired of dealing with harassment and frightened by physical assaults on themselves and their children have been immigrating to Israel for years.

But last week’s terror attack at a kosher supermarket in Paris have many reevaluating whether it’s wise to stay in a country where they are increasingly vulnerable.

That notion played out in 2014, when the French aliyah (immigration to Israel under the Law of Return) led every country in the world, nearly doubling the numbers from the previous year.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, along with Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Economy Minister Naftali Bennett joined other world leaders Monday in a protest march against terrorism in Paris. An estimated 3.5 million people took part.

Over the weekend, Netanyahu encouraged French Jews to consider immigrating to Israel.

“The State of Israel is not just the place to which you turn in prayer,” Netanyahu said. “The State of Israel is also your home.”

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat reiterated the call at a solidarity rally on behalf of French Jewry on Sunday, saying, “Brothers and sisters, the gates of Jerusalem are open to you.”

Barkat told participants the Jerusalem Municipality is opening a special situation room at city hall, staffed by French-speaking Israelis, to assist immigrants with the absorption process.

The bodies of the four Jewish victims were buried at a state ceremony in Jerusalem on Tuesday.

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