

*Letter from  
Rabbi Baruch Edelstein  
Rabbi Yeshayahu Meitles  
Rabbi Nissim Cohen*

*To Whom It May Concern:*

*We have heard evil rumors about an honorable community – the new immigrants from Ethiopia who are called Felesmura.*

*It is falsely alleged that they turn to all types of foreign worship in Israel and they are not part of the Jewish people. This was written, for example, in the Report of the JDC (Joint) dated 4 November 1998.*

*We, the undersigned, are charged with responsibility for this community for the past two years. We work amongst the community every week, conducting separate meetings with each individual family.*

*WE TESTIFY THAT THE TOTAL OPPOSITE IS TRUE: This community undertakes great efforts to be fully integrated into our people and greatly desires to make up for anything they may lack in Jewish studies.*

*Additionally, hundreds of the community's boys are studying in our best Yeshivas (religious schools) and have excelled there, according to the heads of the Yeshivas. The girls also study in religious boarding schools (ulpanot).*

*In the caravan site where the newcomers live (Chatzrot Yassaf) there are synagogues and a mikva (ritual bath). Prayers are conducted three times every weekday as well as on Shabbat and Jewish Holidays.*

*On the holiday of Succoth (Tabernacles) three hundred (300!!!) sets of the four species (lulav and etrog) were brought to the caravan site; each family itself paid the full price for every set.*

*We urgently plead: do not pay any attention to the slanderous campaign against these good people. The campaign comes from a defiled source. The real problem is only that their skin is somewhat darker. Therefore we hope that all who listen to us will exert their efforts to integrate these people into our state. Only blessing will flow from this endeavor.*

*May blessing flow from Him who is the source of all blessing.*

*We hereby affix our signatures:*

*Rabbi Baruch Edelstein*

*Rabbi Yeshayahu Meitles*

*Rabbi Nissim Cohen*

*(This is an English translation of the signed Hebrew original)*