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3 Adar II 5782
March 6, 2022

The Honorable Gideon Sa'ar
Ministry of Justice
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Minister Sa'ar:

I serve as the Israel Regional Vice President of the Coalition for Jewish Values, which represents over 2,000 traditional, observant rabbis in American public policy. I write today concerning the case of Amiram Ben-Uliel, who received multiple life sentences after a confession after questioning that, according to multiple sources, descended into severe torture. His lawyer claims that he never defended any similar case, but could not refrain from helping Mr. Ben-Uliel after examining the methods used by security services to exact his confession. Others point to contrary evidence, such as graphologists who said the two different graffitied signs that Mr. Ben-Uliel "confessed" to composing could not, in fact, have been painted by the same person.

It is unconscionable that a person be convicted based upon a "confession" obtained under torture. This is perhaps one reason why a person's confession is never accepted as evidence under Halacha in non-monetary matters, requiring other testimony to confirm wrongdoing, and confessions are rejected today as probative in all civilized countries. It is simply too easy to bribe, threaten, or torture a person into "confessing" to a crime he did not commit.

There must be investigation as to the veracity of the assertion that the Shabak engaged in torture and, if found to be true, that would be a criminal matter that must be pursued as well. But certainly, while there is doubt whether Mr. Ben-Uliel actually confessed or did so only after torture, his "confession" must be set aside, and he must be granted a trial without such unacceptable evidence. It is not inconsistent to deplore both horrific crimes committed as well as illegal, unconscionable methods used to extract confessions from a particular suspect. Any less would be, in this as in all similar cases, a miscarriage of justice.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Pruzansky", written in a cursive style.

Rabbi Steven Pruzansky
Israel Regional Vice President