

Escaping UKRAINE



The story of
the Ukrainian
refugees



I never thought that such an important mission, of helping thousands of Jews who were cruelly expelled from their homes would become our responsibility.

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Escaping UKRAINE



As the morning dawned on February 24, 2022 (23 Adar I 5782), explosions rocked the Ukraine. At the same time, President Putin declared a ground invasion of Ukraine, and Russian troops and tanks poured across the border. Shells and missiles rained down on Ukraine, as the entire world looked on in shock. Moldova, Ukraine's tiny neighbor to the east, also shook due to explosions that occurred near its border, but the citizens of Moldova did not really experience the war. In response, the Moldovan government took several cautionary steps, the most evident of which was closing the airport to flights. However, what did change the course of life in Moldova was the influx of refugees and their escape to the west via Moldova.

At least half a million refugees have crossed the border from Ukraine. In our estimation, about 20,000 of them are Jews. Seeing them crossing is a sight I will never forget.

There were scenes of people carrying the scant belongings they were allowed to bring with them, among them the elderly and the infirm. The majority of them had exhausted looks on their faces that reflected the 50-60 hours they had spent travelling

(rather than the normal ten hours) in freezing, wintry weather, fearful for their lives as they crossed the border in the face of constant shelling.

Each refugee who escaped with their life was bore an injury, either physical or emotional.

In the Chabad Jewish community in Moldova, we immediately understood that this was the time for action. Even though the war broke out at a rather inopportune time – at the height of massive renovations of the Beit Kneset and our central kitchen, through which the majority of the kosher food in Moldova passes, the influx of refugees left us with no choice, regardless of the difficult physical conditions. Although there was a lack of space, we opened our hearts and when one opens one's heart...everything works out. The kitchen ran from 4 a.m. until midnight, producing up to 1500 portions daily on peak days ,with the help of the regular staff and volunteers, some of whom were themselves Ukrainian refugees. At the



start of the war, when the stream of refugees was relatively small, we were able to find them places to stay in the capital city, Kishinev. However, as the influx grew, it was impossible to find them beds in the city, and when we did find them, the prices were through the roof (at least 150 euros per night)!

We appealed to some Moldovan Parliament members, and they were able to arrange for us to rent rooms in resorts outside of town, which significantly reduced the cost of housing the refugees. On the peak days, we were paying for 600 beds in four different resorts outside of Kishinev. In the resorts, we were able to provide the refugees with hot meals, medical treatment and technical assistance in receiving the necessary paperwork to help them begin their lives anew. It was really important for us to create a comfortable atmosphere for the refugees, so as to ease their minds and facilitate their ability to make the important, and sometimes difficult decisions, that would shape their futures.

Thousands of refugees passed through our care, each with their own personal story, sometimes more difficult, but no less important, than others.

I could write an entire book, with the help of the 40 staff members in Moldova, but I have chosen to share with you five stories, each one representing part of the “Circle of Life” of Am Yisrael, who have strived to continue living and carrying out the Jewish traditions, even in the most difficult of times, such as in the Nazi concentration camps.



A SPECIAL BRIS MILA IN KISHINEV: THE MOHEL AND THE CIRCUMCISION – REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE

Among the great many painful stories of the thousands of Jews who have fled Ukraine to Moldova, this heart-warming story of light and hope symbolizes the continuity of life within the suffering and wandering – a 2 ½-year-old refugee from the city of Kharkiv, undergoing a bris procedure.

The mother, who was not an active member of the Jewish community in Kharkiv, had refused to have him circumcised at birth, but upon their arrival to Kishinev, and after seeing the special reception given to Jewish refugees by the Jewish community in the city, she felt the need to have her son undergo the procedure in order that he be a kosher Jew.

She contacted Rabbi Mendy Axelrod, the Chabad Shaliach in Kishinev, who requested that the rabbi organize the bris mila as soon as possible. Instead of seeking an expert mohel who would be willing to make the long trek to Moldova, they were blessed to find a fellow refugee, Rabbi Yaakov Geisinovitch, who is considered to be the most experienced mohel in the entire region, and who has performed over 500 brisses over the years, throughout Ukraine and Russia.



Due to the fact that our Synagogue was full of refugees, the bris was performed at the Center for Mother and Child in Kishinev. Following the bris, the tot's Jewish name was announced: Chaim Shalom Yoel.

The mother remained in Kishinev for the next month, in order to recover from their escape and the bris. Chaim has been enrolled in the Chabad pre-school in Kishinev. His bris has given us strength to continue our difficult work of rescuing Jewish refugees from Ukraine.





MOLDOVA: AT THE HEIGHT OF FLIGHT – A BAR MITZVAH CELEBRATION, ONE YEAR LATE

Last week a Jewish family arrived who had fled Nikolaev. Their 14-year-old son Eliahu had never put on tefillin in his life. Due to his surgeries on his leg and that his bar mitzvah date had fallen during the pandemic, he had been unable to acquire tefillin and celebrate as expected. When the Shluchim heard about Eliahu's situation, they immediately brought him tefillin and he was able to put them on for the first time in his life. Someone else brought some sweets, and he was able to celebrate an emotional bar mitzvah. When the Shluchim saw that Eliahu was putting on tefillin every day, they surprised him with a gift of a set of tefillin from Rabbi Shalom Gottlieb, the Shaliach from his city.

Anya, the youth's mother, told the Emissary that she feels that this was a special closing of a circle. "We arrive from Nikolaev, the birthplace of the Lubavitcher Rabbi, and here his Shluchim rescue us and help my son to put on tefillin."

On that same day, the Shaliach was able to celebrate another Bar Mitzvah: a 72-year-old man who arrived at the Chabad House, put on tefillin for the first time in his life, as well!

"It was a really special day. Two Bar Mitzvah celebrations in one day!" – the Shaliach summarizes.



CROSS-WAR WEDDING: GROOM FROM UZBEKISTAN AND BRIDE FROM UKRAINE WED 140 DAYS LATE



Ayala Shirel hails from the Kyiv region and Dr. Menachem Zevin was born in Uzbekistan and moved to Brooklyn several years ago. The couple were introduced by a matchmaker at the beginning of the year and after dating for a while, decided to get married. They reserved a wedding hall in Kyiv for March 5th, 2022, but the unexpected war caused them to change their plans.

Ayala made the dangerous escape to Moldova. When she arrived, she asked to fly to Menachem in the U.S.A. but was refused an entry visa by the Americans.





“ The war in Ukraine has made us confront many situations that we had never dreamed of, but has also brought us this emotional moment, in which I accompanied my dear Ayala to the chuppah...Everyone here was excited and surrounded the bride and groom with love.”

Rebbetzin Chaya Zalmanov

Ayala, who had become part of the community in Kishinev, decided that the wedding would take place in the city, and so she contacted Rabbi Abelsky and requested assistance. The Rabbi, together with the Chabad Shluchim on site, helped to organize the event. They rented the Bristol Hotel in Kishinev and made it kosher. Then the kitchen staff at the Kishinev Central Synagogue, under the authority of Rabbi Mendel Gotzel, cooked the meal, which took place in the presence of the happy couple's family, community members and dozens of war refugees.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YELENA: 98 YEARS OLD

Mazal Tov! Yelena, a 98-year-old Holocaust survivor, arrived at the ZAKA compound in Odessa. As a teenager in World War II, she was exiled to Kazakhstan with her parents. Miraculously, they survived the war and returned to Odessa, and Yelena fought to preserve Judaism under the Soviet regime. In recent years, she lived alone in Odessa until the war forced her to take shelter in her basement.



"It brought me back to the dark days of World War II," Yelena said. She was recently brought to the aid compound set up in Kishinev by ZAKA with the help of Chabad of Moldova. She is receiving assistance and medical treatment until she emigrates to Israel on a special medical rescue flight.

SORROW: A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR RESCUED FROM KYIV BY ZAKA VOLUNTEERS PASSED AWAY IN A HOSPITAL IN KISHINEV

Aharon Skamorovski, an 88-year-old Holocaust survivor, was rescued from Kyiv by ZAKA volunteers and arrived at the Chabad-ZAKA complex in Kishinev. Upon his arrival, a doctor in the complex determined that he was suffering from a grave heart condition and evacuated him to the local hospital, where he passed away.

Nachman Dickstein, Deputy Commander of ZAKA Ukraine said: "It pains the heart, we made great efforts in order to extricate him and his wife from Kyiv under shelling..."



On the first night of Pesach, we were able to fly his wife, a Holocaust survivor herself, on a rescue plane from Israel, where she had been staying with her daughter...The doctors fought for his life but eventually had to pronounce him dead.

In the coming days we'll arrange all the paperwork and authorizations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and we'll bring his body to its eternal rest in Israel." Avi Chayat, a ZAKA volunteer in Moldova said: "In the Chabad-ZAKA complex dozens of injured people, elderly, Holocaust survivors and young children who we rescued from Ukraine are being treated...Just last holiday eve...Tatiana, a 99-year-old Holocaust survivor, asked to light candles for the holiday. We were able to stand at her side during this exciting moment. We cried as she recited the blessings, among them the Shehechyanu blessing, which she recited after being unable to light holiday candles for many years."



“ During the holiday, Leonid, a 95-year-old Holocaust survivor from Kharkiv, arrived at the Chabad-ZAKA complex. Leonid was evacuated in a very complicated operation, which lasted more than 20 hours. When he arrived at the complex, he was unable to eat. According to him, he hadn't eaten proper food in a number of weeks, during which he was ill and bedridden at home, reliant on the good will of the neighbors who brought him a little food on occasion. From the moment that he arrived, we have been sitting in his room, making him feel like he's at home, and providing him with medical assistance. During Shabbat he began to eat and told us his emotional story of his childhood in the Holocaust, and about the great many miracles he had experienced throughout his life.





These stories are just a drop in the ocean of the great multitude of stories that have taken place and are still taking place to this very day.

The following story I heard from my cousin, Rabbi Chaim Hildesheim, Director of the Chabad House in Toronto. Not long ago, in the middle of the Shabbat meal at the Chabad House, an older woman entered together with her son. She had been living in the city of Mariupol in Ukraine. When shells fell on their residential building, she and her husband fled. During their escape, her husband collapsed and later died from breathing smoke. She laid next to him, longing for her own death. Many hours later, she was found by her friend, and after much persuasion, convinced her to let go of her husband's body and put her on the bus to Moldova. The journey was long and exhausting and when she arrived at the synagogue in Kishinev, she was in a really bad shape.

In her words: "The Rabbi who served me a bowl of hot soup with a broad smile, brought back my sanity. It was a defining moment that gave me back my strength and provided me the motivation to start anew. After that, I recuperated in the beautiful room that the community had arranged for me. The first thing I did was to contact my son who lives in Toronto. He purchased me a plane ticket and a few days later I landed there. My son was waiting for me at the airport – it was an indescribable meeting. On Shabbat I asked my son to take me to the synagogue in order to give thanks to the Almighty for saving me." Reluctantly, the son took her to the synagogue across the street, but unfortunately, it was closed. He remembered Rabbi Hildesheim's synagogue and took her there instead.

This is how I heard this amazing story. There are many more stories which we will likely never hear.

“ My dear friends, we would never have been able to embark on such an immense project without your support and boundless trust in us. For this I simply say: “Thank you very much.” I would like to thank the Almighty who allowed us to help in these important moments. However, I also pray to the Almighty and ask him from deep in my heart: “Never again! We can’t any longer. Gather us all in Jerusalem and may we all be redeemed very soon!” Like all Chabad Shluchim, we carry the mission given to us by the Rebbe: Do everything possible to bring Moshiach. Hopefully our mutual work has brought us a step closer.

My blessing to you is a quote from the Lubavitcher Rebbe regarding aiding another Jew: “G-d does not remain in debt. For every good thing a person does, he is recompensed grandly by G-d, with children, health and livelihood, in abundance.” May G-d recompense you for all the good you have done to save the Ukrainian refugees!

Such a large project for saving lives could not have been successful without these wonderful angels who worked day and not for our success:

- My son Mendel – (Who was simply amazing!)
Mr. Simcha Buzor – President of the Chabad Central Synagogue Moldova
- Chabad Shluchim Moldova – Rabbi Mendy & Chaya Axelrod, Rabbi Mendy & Leah Gotzel, & Rabbi Shmuel & Chaya Zalmanov, as well as all the staff members.
Rabbi Eliezer Avtzon – Global Jewish Network
- Rabbi David Mondshein & Rabbi Shlomi Peles – Federation of Jewish Communities of the CIS.
- Attorney Alex Galperin – LATET organization
- Mr. Dubi Weisenstern, Nachman & Valerie Dickstein – ZAKA
- Last, but not least, my wife Chaya, and my beloved children for their devotion and support.

With blessings,
Rabbi Zushe Abelsky
Director of the Jewish Community
Chabad Moldova

12 Tamuz, 5782 | July 11th, 2022

A synagogue in Moldova welcomes UKRAINIAN refugees amid ongoing Russian attacks

Rabbi Mendel Askerold carries the Soviet era suitcase of Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine out of her current room at the Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022. Latina is being brought to a hotel near Synagogue Habad Lubavitch Kishinev Chisinau.

Ayala Shirel Horenjenko, left, and Rabbi Mendel Askerold, help to relocate Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine from her room at the Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022 to a hotel with other refugees being held by Rabbi Mendel.

Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine, becomes emotional as she describes packing her Soviet era suitcase by candlelight as bombs were falling around her in Mykolaiv as she sits on her cot at the Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022.



This story was produced in partnership with the Pulitzer Center.

**MICHAEL G. SEAMANS,
FOR USA TODAY**



Rabbi Mendel Askerold shows the flag of the Messiah which pinned to his coat at the Synagogue Habad Lubavitch Kishinev in Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022. "All we do is all grace and all good deeds is for Messiah to come and be in the world only good." He says through a rough translation from Hebrew to English on his smart phone.



Rabbi Mendel Askerold walks the halls of the Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022 as facilitates a new place to accommodate a place to stay for Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine that is closer to the Synagogue.



Rabbi Mendel Askerold stands inside the Synagogue Habad Lubavitch Kishinev Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022. The Synagogue is currently under renovations.

Tatiana Larina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine, tells Olena Khorenjenko, right, about her journey to a refugee housing center at Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova, on March 24.



Tatiana Larina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine, tells Olena Khorenjenko, right, about her journey to a refugee housing center at Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova, on March 24.

Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine displays her several forms of identification, some dating back to the former Soviet Union from when her father was forced to change

his Jewish name, as she sits on her cot a refugee housing center at Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022.



Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine displays her several forms of identification, some dating back to the former Soviet Union from when her father was forced to change his Jewish name, as she sits on her cot a refugee housing center at Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022.



Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine and Ayala Shirel Horenjenko squeeze into a small elevator with Latina's belongings on the third floor of the Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022.



Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine, facing, hugs and says goodbye to another Ukrainian refugee at a refugee housing center at the Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb near Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022.

A member of the Synagogue Habad Lubavitch Kishinev Chisinau, Moldova peels carrots among supplies for Ukrainian refugees.



A volunteer prepares hot meals at the Synagogue Habad Lubavitch Kishinev in Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022 to be delivered to refugees at area shelters.

Tatiana Latina, 73, of Mykolaiv, Ukraine, sits on a bus as she travels from Bukoria Pension in the Vodola-Veda Holiday suburb with Rabbi Mandel Askerold to the Synagogue Habad Lubavitch Kishinev Chisinau, Moldova on Thursday, March 24, 2022.



<https://www.usatoday.com/picture-gallery/news/world/2022/03/27/moldovas-jewish-community-welcomes-ukrainian-refugees-open-arms/7167683001/>

INSIDER



A Holocaust survivor on a converted private jet which will take him to Israel.

A RESCUE MISSION IS UNDERWAY TO EVACUATE TRAUMATIZED HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS FROM UKRAINE'S MOST DANGEROUS CITIES

An operation is underway in Moldova to rescue vulnerable Holocaust survivors from war-torn Ukraine.

Volunteers drive for hours, sometimes days, to evacuate Ukraine's elderly Jewish population from Bucha, Kyiv, Mariupol, and Kharkiv – putting themselves in the line of fire and grave danger of bombardment by Putin's forces.

"If you land in the wrong spot at the wrong time, it could really be really dangerous," Mendel Abelsky of Moldova's Chabad-Lubavitch community told Insider. "They are risking their lives going in."

Working closely with Israeli search and rescue charity ZAKA, Chabad Moldova, a Jewish Hasidic group, has helped rescue more than 75 Holocaust survivors from Ukraine.



After long drives out of their war-ravaged homeland, the survivors are often in need of medical help. They are placed in triage centers in Chişinău, Moldova's capital, before being settled in a 24-room hotel nearby.

There are ten doctors on-site, Abelsky said, who attend to the medical needs of the "weak, old, and sick" patients.

Often the survivors, who witnessed unspeakable Nazi horrors eight decades ago, are in a vulnerable mental state, too, re-traumatized by the Russian atrocities they have witnessed in Ukraine in recent weeks.

“ There's trauma on many levels. For some of them, they're going back to the same bunkers they were in 80 years ago.

- Abelsky said



Tatiana Riabaya — a Ukrainian Holocaust survivor

Insider previously reported on Vanda Semyonovna Obiedkova, 91, who evaded Nazi capture by hiding underground and died last month while taking shelter in a Mariupol basement. Between 1.2 and 1.6 million Jews from Ukraine were murdered during the Nazi Holocaust. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's great-grandparents died when the Nazis burned their village, he told CNN, in March. The survivors, Abelsky said, are often triggered by their childhood memories of mass murder by the Third Reich and are in shock that history seems to be repeating itself.



“ It's people that lost everything, and they persevered to rebuild. And then it's trauma again. It's pain. I don't even have the right words for it all.

- Abelsky said

Holocaust survivor Tatiana Riabaya, 99, never expected that she would have to flee her home again after Hitler's onslaught on the Soviet Union was defeated.

“ Now, at my age, I'm running away from my city again. I did not believe that at my age, almost 100 years old, I would have to go through this again.

she said in an interview conducted by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews.

The Ukrainian Holocaust survivors arrive at the triage centers in Moldova with an understandable pessimism, Abelsky said. "When they see what's going on right now, they predict the worst because they have seen so much crazy," he said.



A Holocaust survivor on a converted private jet which will take him to Israel.



The Jewish survivors are being sent primarily to Israel to spend their final years safely.

"For weeks, we have been treating wounded Holocaust survivors who came as refugees from the war in Ukraine," said Mendy Axelrod, a Chabad rabbi in Moldova, in a press release. "We gave them the most dedicated care, hot food, and medicine. I am so glad that they will now start a new life in the Holy Land."

Chabad Moldova is working with volunteer groups ZAKA, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Ohr Avner Foundation, and the JDC to find new homes for the elderly refugees. Most go to Israel, but those who elect to stay in Europe are placed in nursing homes. The rescue flights take off from Chişinău in

converted private jets — redesigned to accommodate immobile passengers.

The operation, Abelsky said, has been sped up in recent weeks due to rising tensions in the separatist Transnistria region of Moldova. Due to security concerns, the volunteer groups are now working overtime to get emergency flights out of the country as quickly as possible.

The fear of war in Moldova is another worry for the survivors of Hitler's genocide of six million Jews. Abelsky said the job of his team is to calm those fears. "I feel like every word we say. We're taking away from how crazy their experience right now is," he said.



<https://www.businessinsider.com/moldova-operation-rescue-ukraine-holocaust-survivors-chabad-israel-jewish-2022-5>



Ukrainian refugees at Moldova refugee center
Ukrainian refugees at a get-together at one
of the refugee centers in Moldova.

‘A place to sleep:’ Chabad in Moldova turns resorts into refuges for fleeing UKRAINIANS

Forward

JEWISH. INDEPENDENT. NONPROFIT.

By Lauren Hakimi

“Chabad is sheltering and feeding Ukrainian refugees at five resorts in Moldova, which shares a border with Ukraine. Since the Russian invasion began a month ago, the Orthodox Jewish group’s Moldovan arm has assisted thousands of refugees, and is currently caring for 250. Most stay for between five days and two weeks before they find housing in Europe, Israel or elsewhere.

“Our place is to give them a hug, soup, food, a place to sleep, and make sure that they are strong enough to make decisions for their future,” said Rabbi Zushe Abelsky, who is overseeing the operation, which is fueled by donors from around the world. The Forward spoke with him and his son, Mendel, who is fundraising for the effort.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

How do you turn a resort into a refugee center?

Zushe: Today, people are fighting over every bed in Moldova. So we needed some politicians to get involved and get us in touch with the owners of those resorts. Luckily, now is not the season for people to go to such places; it's still a little bit cold. Basically, we make a commitment of paying every night for the full resort or the beds that they're giving us. We hired a whole new crew to help because we need to be on the ground

every day. We have people coming into each resort, speaking to the people, understanding what they need for the day and helping them out. Sometimes people need a doctor; we take them to the hospital. Some people come with very limited clothing. One guy came to me and said, "Listen, I'm wearing my son's sneakers; by mistake, I took them with me." We had to buy new sneakers for him. So you have to listen to each of them, and we have 10 people now whose job it is to do that.

How are these refugee centers different from others?

Mendel: We have five locations that, if a person wants to go on vacation, this is the place to choose. It has a swimming pool – this is not comparable to anything else that's being done. A lot of people, in their head, they say "refugees" – they take a lot of mattresses, they'll go to a gym, put everyone on the floor and tell them "sleep." And just imagine the refugees themselves: they were just on a bus for 50 hours, they lost all their possessions. They lost their dignity. So our responsibility is not just to give them a bed. We want to give them their life back.

How do refugees find you?

Zushe: There's a whole operation to get people out of Ukraine. They let us know when people are coming to the border. So if two buses are coming today, we know to send two buses to the border to welcome them. We take them to the synagogue in Kishinev, we give them a hot meal and they continue on to one of our refugee centers. The next day, after they've slept and ate, we'll take it a little bit further. "OK, so what's your plans?" It's a whole operation to make sure that they can plan their future and be relaxed when making decisions.

Are you taking non-Jewish refugees too, or only Jews?

Zushe: We don't check. Someone wants a hot plate of soup, he gets it.



A room in a Moldova resort that's been converted to a refugee center.



<https://forward.com/news/484410/ukraine-refugees-chabad-moldova/>

People stay in your center for days or weeks and then move on - to where?

Zushe: Everybody makes this choice based on family, friends and what works for them. We let them make the decision on their own, and then we help them accomplish it. It's not our place to tell them what to do. Our place is to give them a hug, soup, food, a place to sleep and make sure that they are strong enough to make decisions for their future.

Are you able to do Shabbat services?

Zushe: Shabbat? Honestly, my phone is open 24/7 including Shabbat, because buses cross the border on Shabbat.

Does everyone have a destination? What if they don't?

Mendel: Most people want to go to Europe, America, and Israel. On the other hand, there are a few that don't have the means to settle elsewhere, and to say, "I want to go to Germany." Some people are elderly; they've never left Ukraine before. Their finances are not at the highest level. And they don't know themselves where

they want to go. They don't have family anywhere. Some people didn't want to leave, but they did because they felt scared for their lives. We recently had a bus of elderly people pull up, and the resort had to clear the first floor for them because these people can't even walk. They can't climb stairs. For them to think where they're going next, they've first got to relax for a little bit.



What effect is this work having on you?

Zushe: You know, my colleague is the chief rabbi of Odessa. He has an orphanage over there. He moved the orphanage from Odesa to Germany with a stop for a weekend in one of our resort areas. We met each other, and we could not speak to each other. We just cried. And I left. You're asking yourself, how strong is your heart that it could break a thousand times a day and you continue? It's just beyond understanding.



DOZENS OF JEWISH REFUGEES ARRIVE IN MOLDOVA, CHABAD EMISSARIES ASSIST

By ZVIKA KLEIN

Chabad emissaries in Moldova, Rabbi Mendy Gotzel and Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanov, assist in the preparations for the absorption of refugees.

First refugees from the war in Ukraine crossed the border into Moldova at noon and arrived at the center of the Jewish community in the capital, Kishinev, headed by the state's chief rabbi, Rabbi Yosef-Yitzhak Abelsky.

Rabbi Mandy Axelrod, a Chabad emissary in the country, said: "In addition to the refugees who have already arrived, people are calling us from Ukraine saying that they want to come. It is a complex timing, especially because of the Sabbath, and it requires us to address and prepare."



Dozens of Jewish refugees arrived in Moldova; Chabad emissaries assist.

"The community's general manager, Rabbi Zosha Abelsky, instructed us to prepare in advance, we bought many groceries and the preparations here are in full swing."

Chabad emissaries in Moldova, Rabbi Mendy Gotzel and Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanov, assist in the preparations for the absorption of refugees.

Rabbi Zalmanov added: "According to estimates, hundreds more Jews will arrive tomorrow, most of them Israelis. We will also help with accommodation as much as we can."

Rabbi Goetzl added: "We ourselves in Moldova fear a Russian invasion, because we may be the next target. Despite everything, the Chabad emissaries remain here in prayer and hope that the war will end soon."

The leaders and rabbis of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Ukraine, an umbrella organization in the country with 160 communities across Ukraine, have decided that the rabbis will stay in the various cities to be with the local population at this difficult time, and not leave the country.

The issue of women and children also came up in the



discussion. In the virtual discussion, it was unanimously decided that the families would also stay, because at this time it is better to be in houses and not move on the roads, for fear of bombing that can, God forbid, cause casualties.

Federation chairman Rabbi Meir Stumbler said: "We stay and pray for the good. Our job is to be with the communities, to help and reassure as much as possible in this war. There is already a shortage of groceries, people are hysterical that despite everything, no one believed that there would indeed be a comprehensive attack on Ukraine. We organized water, food and medicine - including flour and dry products - that will last for a few weeks and will distribute them to Holocaust survivors, the elderly, the disabled and the disabled so that they can stay in their homes."

In addition, the Federation of Jewish Communities in Ukraine has decided to invest a lot of resources and money to secure hundreds of Jewish synagogues and institutions in the country, in order to prevent looting and harassment by antisemites. It is time to call on those who can help with this, we need help financing the many expenses."

MOLDOVAN CHABAD RESCUES JEWISH UKRAINIANS EN ROUTE TO ISRAEL



Ukrainian Jewish refugees at a synagogue in Moldova (Photo: AFP)

Hundreds of Ukrainian refugees arrive in Moldova each day, and many of them are helped by Chabad members who run a rescue effort in the town of Călărași; '3,000 Jewish refugees from Ukraine have passed through here so far,' says one official

As the war in Ukraine continues to rage, millions of people continue to be displaced by the Russian invasion on a daily basis, with no one but volunteer and non-profit groups to rely on. One of those organization is Moldovan Chabad that set up shop on the border with Ukraine, helping refugees, including Jews, safely make it across the border.

Yeroslava had traveled for 24 hours from Kyiv with Dina, her eight-year-old daughter, before they finally managed to cross the border and reach the town of Călărași in Moldova, where they would spend a few days in "Codru" guest house - where Chabad runs their rescue effort.

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Yeroslava's husband, however, had to remain in Kyiv because the Ukrainian authorities would not let him cross the border. "At least he's not in the army," she says. They crossed the border with almost no baggage, and while Yeroslava may not be Jewish, her husband is, so she and her daughter could get assistance from Chabad.

Victoria Stzvichick also arrived in Moldova without her husband from a small town near Kyiv. "My husband couldn't get out of Ukraine but I'm here with my two children, along with my sister and her two children and our mother, and we all want to get to Israel," she says.

Alexandra Zorville, Stzvichick's sister, said they spent two days on the road, coming from the city of Dnipro to a Chabad house in Kishinev and from there to a guest house in Călărăsi. "We left just in time before they started bombing. We were very worried about what would happen and whether we would have a place to sleep and protect ourselves from the cold. When we arrived, we suddenly realized that there are people who take care of all of these things and it warmed our hearts," says Zorville.

In the Codru guest house in Călărăsi, refugees are currently staying along with tourists who came for a vacation. The chief administrator of the place, Andrey David, said that 180 beds have been allocated for refugees from Ukraine. To recruit the place to help, the Chabad organization had to use the help of a local member of parliament, Natalia Davidovich, and a local lawyer, Alex Gneperin.

The chief administrator says that "nearly 3,000 Jewish refugees from Ukraine have passed through here so far. Chabad asked for assistance from the Codru guest house and we immediately decided to help. We are in times of war and we're trying to help people and provide a safe place. We also fear becoming refugees ourselves, but for now, we are optimistic."

Gneperin is originally from Ukraine, and he believes Moldova must assist the refugees because the war is affecting all bordering countries, and it is unclear whether the Moldovan people will also soon need help.



Ukrainian refugees in Moldova (Photo: AFP)



Alexandra Zorville arrives in Israel on a rescue flight from Moldova (Photo: Riki Carmi)

“ There are Russian soldiers in Transnistria [an unrecognized breakaway state located in the narrow strip of land between the river Dniester and the Moldovan–Ukrainian border], 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Kishinev, and word on the street is that the Russians can also invade and take control of Moldova. Our country is divided 50%-50% [of those supporting Russia and those supporting Ukraine], it could create a civil war,” Gneperin adds.

Every day, hundreds of refugees are helped by Chabad, providing a warm bed, food, and even a shoulder to lean on in the days when their future is not clear. The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews donated some \$4 million to the effort.

The Jewish community in Moldova, meanwhile, mobilized to assist them. All of this still feels like a drop in the ocean. Refugees continue to arrive in the country non-stop. "It is estimated that some 200,000 refugees have already left Moldova out of 300,000 who have arrived, but they keep on coming every day," Gneperin says.

On Shabbat, everyone in the guest house mingled with one another. There seemed to be no difference between the refugees and families who came for a vacation. The children were playing in the halls and although snow covered everything outside - inside it was mostly warm and cozy.



Codru guest house,
Moldova
(Photo: Riki Carmi)

Some 150 people arrived on this rescue flight from Kishinev Airport, which was opened especially for the Jewish Agency for Israel and the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews.

Upon landing in the Jewish state, they went through an absorption process, and after that taken by buses to the hotels with the rest of the refugees.

For a moment, whoever came from Ukraine and left behind his or hers entire life could rest and forget the troubles they have gone through - and those waiting for them down the road.

Victoria Stzvichick and Alexandra Zorville's family was lucky, and by Monday, all their travel arrangements were taken care of and they were heading to the rescue flight en route to Israel. In the morning, the six excited members of the family finally boarded the flight, with only one suitcase per person.



Victoria Stzvichick and her children (Photo: Riki Carmi)

The passengers on the flight said they were afraid of starting a new life. They left everything behind, but felt there was no other way and it was time for a new beginning in Israel.



<https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/bkaezrkz9>

CHABAD IN KISHINEV LOOKS TO PROVIDE PURIM CHEER FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES



“

Our main goal isn't to only compensate for what the refugees don't have but to give them a good feeling and make them happy,

- says Chabad emissary Shmulik Zalmanov

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News
Syndicate

ISRAEL HAYOM
This is where we stand

(March 16, 2022 / Israel Hayom) The narrow alleyway leading to the Chabad House in Kishinev, Moldova, was blocked by a truck; the beautiful, 130-year-old synagogue is undergoing a comprehensive overhaul. Workers are pouring concrete.

“We planned on only doing a cosmetic renovation,” said Rabbi Zusha Abelsky. “But the engineer banged on the pillars to the second floor, and we discovered it was all rotting. The renovation itself is a very good thing, but in the middle of it all, a war started.”

Abelsky is the son of Rabbi Zalman Abelsky, who founded Kishinev's Chabad House in 1989. After he passed, Zusha took the reins, traveling back and

forth between Moldova and the United States. Since the war in Ukraine began, he hasn't left Kishinev, even though his wife and children are across the ocean. He runs around day and night in an effort to absorb and help refugees. Next to the tiny, temporary kitchen is a small prayer hall that has been converted into a meal-packing warehouse.

“Five hundred meals have already been packaged and distributed to the refugees, and now we're packing another 500,” said Shmulik Zalmanov from Migdal Haemek in Israel, who has lived with his family in Kishinev for the past two years as the Chabad emissary to the city.

“The one-thousand kosher meals we cook every day and distribute to the Jewish refugees who are dispersed throughout the various facilities in Kishinev—we make here in a small, temporary kitchen,” said Rabbi Abelsky. “We’ve added more workers, and everyone cooks around the clock,” he added, noting that one of their main partners in the effort is the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews.

“Our main goal isn’t to only compensate for what the refugees don’t have but to give them a good feeling and make them happy. It is touching every single time to see the joy of the children and adults when they receive Purim baskets. - said Zalmanov

Among the youngsters packing the meals are two women refugees who volunteered for the task. One of them is Nadia Serman, from Kyiv.

“When the war erupted I was working at the time in Uman. I managed to make it to Odessa, and from there took a bus provided by the Jewish community to Moldova. My daughter escaped to Romania, and I hope to meet her in Israel,” she said. Despite her warm, smiling face, she is on the verge of tears. She has been waiting in Kishinev for 11 days now. Her appointment at the Israeli consulate, which is struggling to keep up with the immigration requests, was scheduled for Wednesday.

“On [Wednesday afternoon] we will erect a large tent in the yard, with heaters, where we will read the Scroll of Esther,” said Rabbi Abelsky. “We are also organizing a Purim party for the preschool children on Thursday, and maybe we’ll even manage by then to get our hands on some costumes for them,” he added.

“Although there are kids here with almost no regular clothes, it’s still important to make them happy with costumes. We are already making plans for Passover as well. Every Chabad emissary knows that even in normal times, Passover plans begin as early as Hanukkah. We were used to shipping out matzot from Odessa, but now they will be shipped from Israel,” he said.



<https://www.jns.org/chabad-in-kishinev-looks-to-provide-purim-cheer-for-ukrainian-refugees/>

PRESIDENT OF MOLDOVA THANKS JEWISH COMMUNITY FOR CARE OF REFUGEES



Moldovan Rabbi Zushe Abelsky, left, meets with the President of the Republic of Moldova Maia Sandu.

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On April 6, the President of the Republic of Moldova Maia Sandu met with Rabbi Zushe Abelsky, chief rabbi of the Jewish community of Moldova, to thank him for his efforts to absorb thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing Ukraine, as well as for the construction of five refugee camps. These camps are not only housing the refugees, but taking care of all their needs as well; they currently serve 2,000 people. Both the assistant president for minority affairs and the president's chief of staff were also present at this meeting.

The Republic of Moldova shares a border with Ukraine. The Jewish community of Moldova is estimated to have 4,000 members. There are six families of Chabad emissaries in Moldova, and an extensive team of 75 employees in the various institutions and organizations that they operate.

President Sandu acknowledged the Jewish community's extensive activities taking place around the clock—educational institutions for children, such as kindergartens and a Jewish school, the absorption of refugees, and the preparations for the upcoming Seder night. The Jewish community of Moldova can expect no less than five different events to take place on the night of the Seder. With the acknowledgement of these various activities, the president stated: "Kishinev has become a place where Jews who are disturbed and made to flee have a place where they see a home that protects them, without experiencing persecution and antixemitic incidents."

The Moldovan presidency itself posted a message on the official Facebook page that read, in part:

“Discussions commemorated the victims of the Jewish pogrom that erupted 119 years ago in Chisinau, but also the victims of the war Russia is waging in Ukraine.

April 6 marked the 119th anniversary of the outbreak of the infamous Kishinev Pogrom, in which 68 Jews were massacred. Thousands were left homeless, with property damaged measured in millions of rubles.



Moldovan Rabbi Zushe Abelsky, left, meets with the President of the Republic of Moldova Maia Sandu.

President Sando mentioned that one of her priorities is to build a "united and harmonious society in Moldova, where everyone feels safe and knows that their civil and individual rights are respected." She thanked the Jewish community for the humanitarian aid granted by the State of Israel through the Jewish community in the Republic of Moldova. "Rabbi Abelsky, for his part, praised the involvement of the citizens of Moldova in helping the refugees, and the generosity shown by the people," the presidential office said in a statement.

By Harry Glazer



<https://jewishlink.news/world-us/50636-president-of-moldova-thanks-jewish-community-for-care-of-refugees>



Jewish community in Moldova prepares matzah for the refugees.

CHIEF RABBI OF ISRAEL, RABBI DAVID LAU VISITS THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF MOLDOVA



The Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi David Lau, made a quick visit to Moldova, to strengthen the Jewish community that has been assisting thousands of Jewish refugees from Ukraine.

Rabbi Lau visited the community as a guest of the community's director, Rabbi Zushe Abelsky and Shliach, Rabbi Mendy Axelrod.

Rabbi Lau told Rabbi Abelsky: "I am excited to be here and to see with my own eyes the incredible, non-stop activity you are doing here for the refugees, and not shying away because the many expenses. You are an inspiration to the People of Israel and to the entire world."

Rabbi Lau met with Rabbi Abelsky the Kishinev Shul, which was originally built in 1888.

Known as the Glaziers Shul, the synagogue thrived during this period of vibrant Jewish life in Kishinev.

The synagogue remained active until it was destroyed by the Nazi Air Force during World War II. After the war, the remaining Jewish community in Kishinev raised the funds and received permission from the Soviet government to reconstruct the synagogue. Almost nothing was left: the roof, walls, ceiling, doors, windows, and stairs had all been destroyed by the Nazis.

Many front-line soldiers who were wounded or crippled during the war took part in rebuilding the synagogue. Despite the physical challenges, they remembered that their parents and grandparents had davened in this shul, and it was important to them to rebuild it. Miraculously, the synagogue was rebuilt within a year. It was the only synagogue that the Soviets allowed to continue to operate during the Soviet era, albeit with many restrictions.

When the Soviet era came to a close, Chief Rabbi of Moldova, Rabbi Zalman Abelsky z"l, Shliach of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, came to Moldova. He brought back the vibrant Jewish life in Kishinev that the repressive Soviet government had tried to extinguish. The synagogue remained the central hub of Jewish life in Kishinev, though Rabbi Abelsky also built new Jewish schools, a pre-school, and a women's teaching college. Jewish traditions came back to life in Moldova.



Today, Rabbi Zalman Abelsky's incredible work is continued by his son's, Rabbi Yosef Abelsky, who took over as Chief Rabbi, and Rabbi Zushe Abelsky, who directs Chabad of Moldova. Additionally, there are three families of Shluchim who work each day to spread warmth and Judaism in Moldova, the Axelrod, Gotsel and Zalmanov families. Please support thousands of refugees



<https://vinnews.com/2022/03/10/watch-chief-rabbi-of-israel-rabbi-david-lau-visits-the-jewish-community-of-moldova/>





BENNETT ZOOMS WITH CHABAD OF MOLDOVA AND UKRAINE: 'AM YISROEL OWES YOU' - THE LAKEWOOD SCOOP



Bennet Zooms with Chabad of Moldova and Ukraine: "Am Yisroel owes you."

On Tuesday, March 4th, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennet met with the leaders of Ukrainian Jewry. Bennet, who is in an attempt to mediate between Russia and Ukraine, listened carefully to the updates on the ground.

Rabbi Zushe Abelsky, leader of the Moldovan Jewish community, briefed the Israeli Prime Minister on the efforts of Chabad of Moldova. During this time of crisis, Chabad of Moldova has been working around the clock, together with their team of over forty full-time staff members.

Among those present at the meeting was Rabbi Shmuel Kamintsky; Rabbi of Dnipro, Rabbi Meir Stumbler; Chairman of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Ukraine, and Rabbi Yosef Wolf; Rabbi of the city of Kherson (now under Russian control). Additional representatives at the meeting included the Rabbi of the Kedem community in Kiev, which is made up of refugees from Donetsk; Rabbi Pinchas Vishtzky.

Rabbi Shalom Gopin, who served as rabbi of Lugansk until the events of the violence eight years ago, was present as well.

The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation, on behalf of the Government and State of Israel, to Chabad emissaries around the world, and specifically in Ukraine. He stated that they demonstrate wonderful leadership, expressed in genuine concern for every member and society in their communities. "The people of Israel owe you," said Bennett.

Chabad Moldova is currently running a campaign to support the thousands of refugees on the run.


<https://thelakewoodscoop.com/news/bennett-zooms-with-chabad-of-moldova-and-ukraine-am-yisroel-owes-you/>



THE STORY OF ONE SALVATION

- By Malka Bondar



Your mother was taken to the emergency hospital, she has serious medical problems ...

These are words that can unsettle even the most peaceful home environment. For the ones who run from the war and are taking refuge in a foreign country, it causes extreme panic. There's chilling fear – it hinders movement and makes it difficult to breathe, but you can't succumb to it - you need to act quickly.

The news about my mother's illness was told to me by phone. After nine hours on a bus traveling from Kishinev to Bucharest, I was preparing to meet my mother, who was also to arrive soon. The beginning of the war found us in different cities of Ukraine: I was in Kyiv, my mother was in Dnipro. Therefore, we evacuated at different times and by different routes.

Eventually traveling through Moldova, we both planned to get to Romania, where we would take a breather and figure out our plan. Unfortunately, these plans were not destined to be realized to the end.

Mom never made it to Bucharest - in Kishinev, she started bleeding internally.

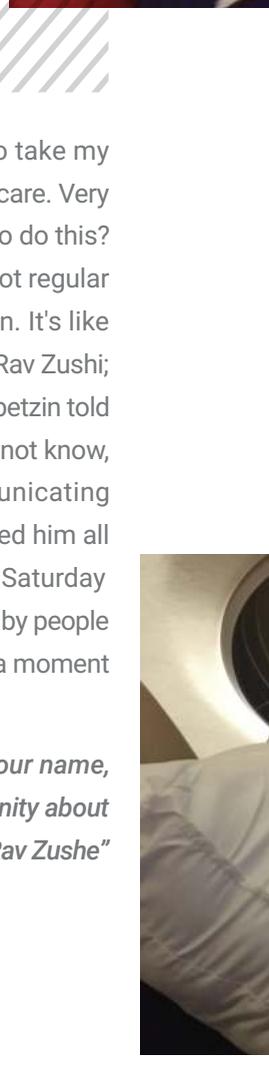
When we were able to leave Ukraine, we were met on the Moldovan side by friendly and caring volunteers. We drank hot tea and offered to choose from warm clothes donated by local residents. This was very helpful, as all of us had pretty much frozen during the journey.

Finally, I was reunited with my mother in Moldova – but she was very sick. My pale, emaciated mother with bandaged wrists hugged me and with tears in a half whisper she said: "What will happen to me?" - I wanted to fall through the ground. My mental and physical strength were already running out when a miracle happened, saving both of us.

Friday night, during the first Shabbat meal at Beit Chabad, I told Rebetzin Leah about my concerns for my mother.

She advised looking for an opportunity to take my mother to a country with the best medical care. Very logical advice, but how would we be able to do this? Her condition was not stable. "You need not regular transportation, but medical transportation. It's like an ambulance for long distances. Contact Rav Zushi; if anyone can help, then only he can," the rebetzin told me confidently. She pointed to a man I did not know, enthusiastically and emotionally communicating with several interlocutors at once. I watched him all evening but did not dare to approach. On Saturday morning and afternoon, he was surrounded by people all the time, but I was lucky enough to find a moment to speak with him.

"I don't know anything about you except your name, but when I told the rebetzin to this community about my situation, she advised me to speak with Rav Zushe"





He smiled, and it was clear that people very often turn to him for help. He listened to me in silence, and after a short pause he said in a low voice:

"I'm not promising anything, but I'll make a few calls after Shabbat."

After the evening prayer at the end of Saturday, Rav Zushe didn't stop working on getting my mother help. I followed on his heels, afraid to miss the moment when it would become clear whether it was possible to arrange for my mother's medical transportation.



At some point he told me that there wouldn't be an answer today – that I should go home and he would do everything he could to help me. Later I learned that the name of the person who helped me was Rav Zushe Abelsky, and that he was one of central figures in the Jewish community of Kishinev, and that outside of Moldova there are many people who have good reasons to thank him all their lives. I also learned that he turned to Hatzalah to help my mother. This is a Jewish organization that is considered the largest volunteer ambulance service in the world. Its volunteers are doctors, paramedics and managers of medical transportation - already in the first month of the war, they had helped several thousand Ukrainian Jews who needed urgent medical care.



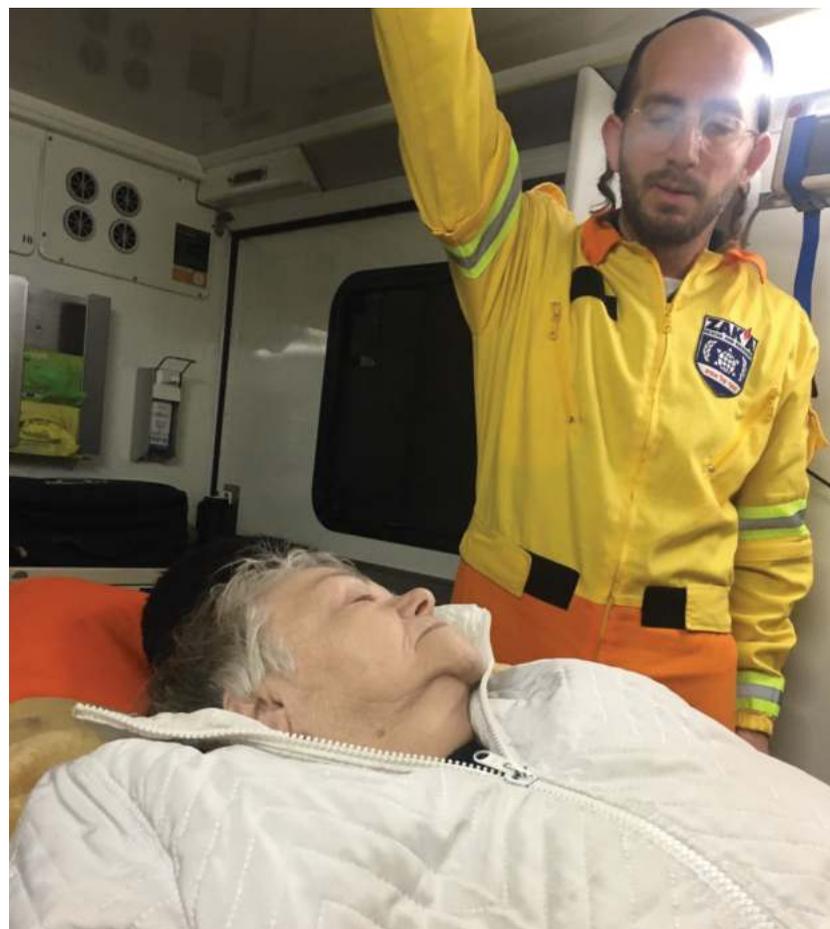
A few days after that memorable Shabbat, the plane with the Hatzalah brigade on board transported me and my mother to Berlin. All along the way, the volunteers followed the changes her condition with the help of special diagnostic equipment. From time to time someone would ask how she felt, and if she needed some extra help.

Having recovered a little, thanks to the warm and attentive attitude of the Hatzalah mom volunteers, my mom asked: *“why do they care about me that much?”* The response, *“because that is the way to treat a patient in your condition,”* stuck in my mind.

Now I was crying on her shoulder, but they were tears of relief. I understood that we were saved, and my mother had a chance for recovery. In Berlin, my mother was sent directly from the airport to the Charite hospital, which is considered one of the best in Europe.

A few days later, her condition had not completely stabilized, but she improved enough that it was possible to move her from the hospital to the rehabilitation center. She still needs medical attention, but now it is no longer about saving her life; instead, it's about improving its quality.

“ *I don't know if I'll ever meet Rabbi Zushe Abelsky again, but I know for sure that I will not miss the opportunity to say thank you to him no matter how much time passes.*



A PLANE, DOCTOR AND A LUBAVITCHER

Yesterday, we were privileged to carry out another medical rescue mission – Rescue Flight 6. The refugees from Ukraine we were able to rescue and provide medical care for are from the heart of Ukraine – some of them from areas in the heart of the fighting.



Their journey begins with a ZAKA application, which is usually filled out by relatives. The volunteers at the call center speak with the family members or the applicants themselves to find out more about their situation and their specific needs.

If we are successful in bringing the refugees out of Ukraine and into Moldova, we bring them to the medical center we opened in Kishinev (a 24 room boutique hotel with doctors and support staff). If they require more advanced medical attention, we send them on a special rescue flight to Israel. The plane can fit 20 people lying down and always has doctors on it.

Over the last two months, we have had six such life-saving flights.

The rabbi of the Chabad community and some of the medical assistants joined the ambulances that brought the patients to the facility in Kishinev. Chabad has made sure to provide all the meals and other needs of the volunteers and Jewish residences, including providing matzah for the Passover seder and kosher meat for Israeli Independence Day.

In the front seat of the plane, someone took advantage of the time needed to load the plane, pulled out tefillin, placed it skillfully on an 80 year old man and taught him "Shema Israel" for the first time.

Also on the plane is Dr. Yevgeny Plotkin, an anesthesiologist at Hadassah Hospital who volunteered to go on the rescue missions. He pulled out a syringe in order to stabilize a patient aboard the flight.

The rescue flight was made possible because of our partners: Rabbi Moshe Pima and the Yad Israel

organization, the Friendship Foundation, the Gwyneth, the Jewish Agency, the Chabad community in Moldova and the Jewish community, Tamir Airways, Laufer Land Services, The Ministry of Absorption, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Welfare, the Airports Authority, Ezer Zion, and the many other good people who are committed to good deeds.

Chaim Otmazgin
ZAKA emergency response team



THE CHABAD (GLEIZER) SHUL: A HOME FOR THE JEWS OF MOLDOVA FOR 130 YEARS



The Kishinev Shul was built over 130 years ago and has been the spiritual home for the Jews of Moldova ever since.

The Shul was destroyed by the Nazis, but was quickly rebuilt by the Jewish community who was so dedicated to its survival. During the war, the Shul's Rabbi, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Tsirelson z"l, was tragically executed by the Nazis along with forty other Jewish leaders after the Nazis captured Kishinev in 1941.

During the Soviet era, the Shul was the only synagogue allowed to operate in all of Moldova, and it kept that spark of Jewish life alive despite the repressive communist regime.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Chabad Lubavitch has maintained the Shul that brings food for the body and food for the soul to all the Jews of Moldova.

Thanks to your support over the years, our community continues to grow. And we're renovating our shul to better serve the needs of Kishinev and Moldova Jewry while still maintaining its history.

And we need your help to complete the construction.

With your help, the Jews of Kishinev will have the shul that they deserve, and Jewish life will sustain itself in the poorest country in Europe.



The Holocaust has always been a part of my life. As the son of a mother who herself is a Holocaust survivor and lost most of her family then, I was educated that our job was to help "Am Israel - the Jewish Nation" rebuild. In the usual language of Chabad, we call this "Shlichut".

I never thought that such an important mission, of helping thousands of Jews who were cruelly expelled from their homes, would become our responsibility.

We, a team of 40 people at Chabad Moldova, have done our best to help refugees with food, accommodation, medical assistance and anything else that was needed to help them make the right decisions in these difficult moments. Thank you for the trust you have placed in us, and thanks to your partnership with us, we have helped thousands of people. We saved some of them from certain death, and with many of them, we will never really know how important our help was...

Thank you for taking part!

Jewish Community Chabad Moldova

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