

June 1, 2014

Mr. Roberto Rodríguez Ponce de León
Executive Producer
Neuquen
Küçük Bebek Caddesi No.: 64 D.: 2
Bebek, Istanbul

Dear Mr. Rodríguez Ponce de León:

Earlier this year, you met with my colleagues, Consul General Chuck Hunter and Public Affairs Officer Craig Dicker at the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul to discuss the documentary television series, “Jew’els of Spain” which you are producing.

I am very interested in your project. A documentary television series on the history of the Sephardic Jewish community in 8 selected countries in Europe and the Near East, including Turkey, would help inform viewers around the world of the tremendous contributions Sephardic Jews have made over the centuries in many different fields.

The United States has long been home to a vibrant Sephardic Jewish community. From Benjamin Cardoza, the esteemed U.S. Supreme Court Justice to the poet Emma Lazarus, best known for the lines from her sonnet engraved on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, American Sephardic Jews have distinguished themselves on America soil.

I whole-heartedly endorse your project. By reminding people of how diversity and mutual respect and understanding are fundamental to free and dynamic societies, your project will contribute to regional peace and cooperation. Although I will be leaving Turkey in the near future, I am quite certain that I will have opportunities to view this television production once it is released and look forward to learning from the experience of the Sephardic Jews of Turkey and elsewhere in the region.

Sincerely,

Francis J. Ricciardone