

Canadian Friends Service Committee
Quakers working for justice and peace



Ecumenical Statement of solidarity with Palestinian and Israeli partners – March 5, 2025

"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people." Isaiah 10:1-2

We, the undersigned Canadian churches and church-related organizations, stand united with Palestinian and Israeli partners in calling for the international community to hold Israel and Hamas accountable for their violations of international law. Appalled by the Trump Administration's statements supporting ethnic cleansing and further forced displacement in Gaza, we call on members of our churches and all Canadians to act in support of the human rights and dignity of Palestinians, and in opposition to continuing violations of their legal, civil and human rights by the Israeli government and its allies. We have been advocating for the safe release of all captives and lament the violence. All lives are sacred and deserving of respect, dignity and safety. We echo the UN Secretary General's condemnation of the disrespect shown by Hamas towards the remains of deceased Israeli hostages returned to their families. Created in the image of God, the bodies of the deceased should be respected.

Canada must take immediate actions to address Israel's repeated violations of international law, in accordance with its own obligations under the same, as it has done in the context of Russia's occupation of the Crimea region of Ukraine. We call on Canada to impose political, economic and diplomatic consequences in all its dealings with the Israeli government going forward as a result of Israel's documented genocidal acts¹ against Palestinians in Gaza, its illegal annexation of East Jerusalem and planned annexation of the West Bank, its ongoing violations of Palestinian rights and dignity, and its persistent refusal to comply with international law.

Our calls are grounded in and informed by long term partnerships with churches, development and human rights organizations in Palestine and Israel. These partners risk their lives daily to hold onto the goal of peace with dignity and justice for all Palestinians and all Israelis. Across Canada, KAIROS and member

¹ documentation includes: [International Criminal Court \(ICC\) - Summary of the Order of 26](#), January 2024; [Amnesty International Report concludes Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza](#), December, 2024.

churches bring together more than four million people from our communities. Almost a year ago (in May 2024) we mobilized churches throughout Canada and brought church leaders to Ottawa during the [Gaza Ceasefire pilgrimage](#) with clear calls to Canadian officials for an enduring and sustained ceasefire, immediate flow of life saving humanitarian assistance, release of all captives, an end to all arms transfers to Israel and ending occupation so a just peace can begin.

We [welcomed the news of a ceasefire in Gaza](#) and continue to pray for it to be permanent and respected. And yet, the prospects for Palestinian self-determination and an end to occupation—conditions required for an enduring and just peace—are systematically and brutally denied before our eyes. International law and human rights continue to be brazenly violated, allowing impunity to prevail.

We cannot remain silent.

With deep concern, dismay, and indeed outrage, we strenuously object to the proposal made by the President of the United States of America (USA) regarding the future of Gaza on February 4, 2025. President Trump's threats to "take over the Gaza Strip" and "own it," even using US troops to do so, must be vociferously rejected and condemned by all people of conscience, in the strongest terms. As these headlines make the news, Israel's illegal annexation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank continues unabated and unchallenged by the international community. We are gravely concerned about this situation of expanding violence, forced displacements, and arbitrary killings and arrests in the West Bank. We fear that Israel is using the ceasefire and "temporary pause" in fighting in Gaza to expand its plans for annexation of the West Bank. Partners have warned about the "Gazafication" of the West Bank. And yet, there is a disconnect in reporting on Gaza and the West Bank as the unjust situation in the West Bank is rarely mentioned.

We affirm the [February 14th statement](#) of the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches of Jerusalem. We further echo the sentiments of the World Council of Churches' [statement on the future of Gaza](#), which clearly communicates that President Trump's proposal is tantamount to full-scale ethnic cleansing and neo-colonization of the homeland of the two million Palestinians of Gaza. It violates every applicable principle of international humanitarian and human rights law, flouts decades of efforts by the international community – including by the USA – for a just and sustainable peace for the peoples of the region, and would, if implemented, constitute multiple international crimes of the most serious kind. The standing of the United States of America as a responsible member of the international community has been severely compromised by the proposal.

We call on the Government of Canada to join many other nations in publicly opposing this idea at every opportunity. We call on Canada to pressure the US President to immediately retract this proposal, and to respect international law and equal human dignity and rights of the people of Gaza. The USA and Israel's colonial agenda must be wholly rejected and opposed.

As churches, through awareness-raising and advocacy, we commit to challenging theologies and political ideologies that sustain and support racist and colonial government policies and practices. We commit ourselves to addressing our own policies and theologies that prevent us from engaging in costly solidarity with Palestinian siblings bearing the brunt of inhumane political, economic and military actions.

Words are not enough. We call on church members to continue to pray and act for peace. We urge church members to share their concerns for human rights, international law, and a just peace in the Middle East

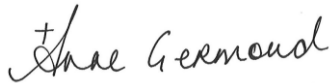
with their elected leaders and with those seeking public office. We call on member churches, church constituents and all Canadians to amplify the calls of churches, faith leaders, civil society organizations and partners in the region for just peace, human dignity and international law, with strength and with urgency.²



The Rev. Susan C. Johnson,
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The Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls
Moderator of the 2024 General Assembly
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² Some of these calls can be found [here](#)