



Jerusalem, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**An Urgent Call to  
His Holiness Pope Francis, the global ecumenical movement and World Council of Churches**

**Join the Palestinian Christians: Resist the Ethnic Cleansing of East Jerusalem**

*Thus says the LORD:  
Maintain justice, and do what is right,  
for soon my salvation will come,  
and my deliverance be revealed.  
Isaiah 56:1*

Your sisters and brothers in Palestine implore you to resist the State of Israel's impending eviction of 15 families from their homes in the Israeli occupied territory of East Jerusalem. Israeli courts have ruled in favor of lawsuits undertaken by settler organizations to remove these families—yet another instance of Israel's illegal policy of forced transfer. Evictions are scheduled to take place on Sunday, May 2, which happens to coincide with the Greek Orthodox celebration of Easter.

Most of these families, totaling 37 households of around 195 Palestinians, are refugees who in 1948 were forcibly transferred from their homes during the 1948 Nakba (catastrophe). They reside now in the Karm Al-Ja'ouni area of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and the Batn Al-Hawa neighborhood in Silwan.

We don't understand the reluctance of many leaders in the global church to use the words apartheid and ethnic cleansing to describe the laws and practices of the State of Israel in relation to its Palestinian citizens and the nearly 5.2 million Muslims and Christians in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. We reject their hesitancy to condemn the political program of Zionism, fearing the charge of antisemitism. Many Jews and Jewish organizations—both in Israel and around the world—have led in exposing the reality of Israel's apartheid regime and decried its impunity on the international stage.<sup>1</sup>

Daily we experience the restrictions, the dehumanization, the brutality and loss of life resulting from these apartheid laws and policies. Daily we suffer the abuses of Zionism, which as practiced in Israel and Palestine clearly favors the rights of one people, one ethnicity, over another.

On one hand, Israel supports its settler groups taking back their alleged properties by force, while refusing any Palestinian lawful claims to their original properties in West Jerusalem where they were forced out during the 1948.

Kairos Palestine, the most extensive Palestinian Christian ecumenical non-violent movement, is based on Kairos Palestine document: A Moment of Truth, launched in 2009, affirming that the Palestinian Christians are part and parcel of the Palestinian nation, calling for peace to end all suffering in the Holy Land by laboring for justice, hope and love, embraced by the Christian community, signed by all historically recognized Palestinian Christian organizations, and endorsed by the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem.

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Surely you understand our disappointment—bordering on despair—that the global church has not more fully embraced our many urgent calls for concrete and practical acts to end the occupation, the latest being our 2020 [Cry for Hope: A Call to Decisive Action](#). Still, we place our hope in your solidarity.

### **What are we imploring you to do?**

- Regarding the impending May 2 evictions—and the hundreds more expected in the neighborhood of Batan al-Hawa in East Jerusalem’s Silwan—write to your governments, insisting that they intervene to stop this action on the basis of human dignity and international law.
- Read our “Cry for Hope: A Call to Decisive Action” and implement its recommendations.

Respectfully, we ask you to reply in writing ([kairos@kairospalestine.ps](mailto:kairos@kairospalestine.ps)) to let us know how you plan to respond to this Call.

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*  
Matthew 5:9

## **Kairos Palestine**

1 In a February 16, 2021 statement, Israeli NGO Peace Now said that the decision to evict was “part of an organized move designed to dispossess a Palestinian community of its home and establish a settlement in Sheikh Jarrah in its place.” In January 2021, the respected Israeli human rights organization, B’tselem, issued its [report](#), “A Regime of Jewish Supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is Apartheid,” writing that “A regime that uses laws, practices and organized violence to cement the supremacy of one group over another is an apartheid regime.”

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