



Today, “This scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”

Luke 4,21

Acknowledging the signs of the times is a gift of the prophets. Prophets, however, do not create with words or gestures the events that take place in history. There are times in which we expect the rising of signs to show us the imminence of God’s action in the world. This propitious time, a moment of truth, a time in which something meaningful happens is called in the Biblical tradition *kairós*. Palestinian sisters and brothers recognized in their context of rights violation, expropriation of land and apartheid a very specific *kairós*, in which God calls human beings to take a stand. It’s a new time in which God requires action, time of conversion.

We have also been waiting for the signs of God, his/her breath and the necessary courage to rise in prophetic solidarity. We have identified that the time has come for us, Brazilian Christians, to respond to the claim and calling for solidarity of Palestinian sisters and brothers, men and women, Christians, Arabs, Jews or from any other religious tradition, people confined to the territories illegally occupied by the State of Israel or people that are in the Diaspora, exiled, refugee in other countries, without rights and citizenship. Palestinian sisters and brothers have from the Christians in Brazil here represented the solidarity of whom, somehow, know what a time of rights denial means.

We welcome and respond with solidarity and hope to the document “Kairós Palestine – The time of truth: from the midst of Palestinian suffering, a message of faith, hope and love”.

A word from our reality

- In Latin America we know what it means to have body, heart and history sealed with pain and doubts. Pain from the violent and oppressive colonization model tied to a religious project of power that subjugated territory, subjugated identities and subjugated possibilities of life in common. And doubts, many doubts! Each process of self determination in Latin America has been always marked by coups, by threat of processes and leaderships and by the postponing of alternative politics of life for the majorities. Our pain and our doubt are animated by the rebellious hope that insists in organizing people, invent alternatives and actively hope for liberation;

- As Christians living in Latin America, we cannot stay silent before the task to denounce the violence and oppression of any kind. When we are dealing with violence and segregation of the impoverished, our history of struggle against social, ethnic, gender, sexual minorities injustice, constructed from the praxis of Liberation Theology, impels us and calls us to solidarity with the people of Palestine, no matter creed or religion. The struggle for land, for the right to inhabit the created world, has always been and still is the struggle of many of us;

- From the shared pain and from the obstinacy fed by the doubts we welcome the call from *Kairós Palestine* and respond with our own history, but also with the loving commitment with other lands and struggles which are also ours. God’s signs manifest before our eyes and we, impelled by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, need to respond. We do not accept and will never accept the wall of hatred, the wall of fear, that wall that signalizes and deepens for all sides, a systemic scar made of oppression, injustice and deaths that already last for years. We will not accept that all Palestinian people continue to be debased, robbed of their honor



and their divine image. So, we repent from leaving them isolated for so long and for the absence of our commitment and unceasing prayers. We ask our brother and sisters for forgiveness and to God for mercy on all of us and especially on the people of Palestine;

- We are against the oppression of the Palestinian people, we are in favor of their autonomy, their freedom and their right to the land who belonged to their ancestors so that they can accomplish their history as people, with language and culture. We want to be with them so that they are free, our brothers and sisters. And from that freedom with autonomy establish the process of peace and reconciliation with the State of Israel.

A word on the reality of Palestine

I don't join my voice with the ones who, speaking of peace, ask the oppressed, the ragged of the world, for their resignation. My voice has another semantic, has another music. I speak of resistance, indignation, the "righteous anger" of the betrayed and the deceived. From their right and from their duty to rebel against the ethical transgressions of which they are victims suffering more and more.

- Paulo Freire

- We identify that the destruction of thousands of houses from Palestinian families, since the war of 1967, which continues up until today, with the last of Israel's military assault against Gaza, puts in permanent risk the life of a whole people. Attacking civil housing, killing innocent children in the name of the security of a State is a crime. The State of Israel must respond for those crimes before international courts. But the life of Palestinian people is impaired not only in these moments of open war. This happens daily at the control stations that preclude Palestinians from leaving and returning freely in their territories, suffering humiliating constraints which are not limited to adult people but also to children.

- We understand that the settlements and the wall constructed by Israel in Cisjordania represent an *apartheid* that, under any aspect, creates a dramatically unfair situation. The International Community cannot be silent before the atrocities committed against the Palestinian people. Peace in the Middle East needs to be grounded on justice and the search for non-violent alternatives. There are thousands of Israeli citizens who do not agree with the militaristic policy of the Zionist State, although the international media condemn those voices. Those people are convinced that it is possible to reach a peace agreement that allows the peaceful and just living together between both peoples;

- We understand that the walls, illegal occupation and indiscriminate use of military force, mostly against a disarmed civil population, will never open ways for a lasting peace. It is necessary to state that the safety of Israel is in the reverse of its warmonger policy. Peace with justice and acknowledgment of the *other* is the only possibility for a dignified future for all;

- We express our solidarity to the women who live in occupied territory. We are aware of reports from women who are in Israeli jails under inhumane conditions, away from their sons and daughters for being in prison, who lost their sons and daughters in the conflicts. Many others are violated. Many women have participated in the struggles for liberation and we support their leadership and role as protagonists;

- We acknowledge and denounce the fact that the State of Israel sins against God and against the Palestinian people. The sin is not seen as an individual fault. It is also committed by social groups and structures that, while using power, promote violence and inequality. In a special way sin expresses itself in oppressive political projects that around



the world subordinate the poor majorities, institute terror among peoples and steal territories. Also in Brazil we deal with a violent and threatening State for indigenous communities and other ways of living;

- We identify with the Palestinian struggle from the Latin American struggle for the land. Land as a place to live, place of culture and memory. And from the land that moans with the shed of blood of sisters and brothers, and the suffering of the land slaughtered by the predatory capitalism, we listen to the outcry of *Kairós Palestine*. We acknowledge that the politics of occupation of the State of Israel along the last 50 years and the daily invasion of the Palestinian territory in the violent advances of the illegal settlements has generated thousands of deaths, thousands of exiled, thousands of prisoners. Those who organize and fight have experienced criminalization and the exasperation of the means of resistance and creation of alternatives;

- We are moved also by the unequal and non sustainable control of the limited water resources in the region on the part of the State of Israel which punishes the Palestinian population and compromises the environmental integrity. It is necessary to require that Israel also fulfills the international regulations on waters and acknowledges the Palestinian people and their right to land and water;

- We acknowledge and are aware of the contradictions and shortcomings of the mediations of resistance and defense of the struggle and sovereignty of our peoples. Even so, we consider the suffering as a place of fundamental learning of “another possible world” that we yearn and live for. We affirm radically the right to resistance, the peaceful search for the right, and the construction of international political consensus that are respected and that guarantee the life of the Palestinian people. We reject the manipulation that Israel and the international media do about the resistance of Palestinians, distorting the real nature of the conflict, presenting it as a war of Israel against terrorism. We affirm the right to resistance of the Palestinian people and call for international mechanisms that guarantee the rights and agreements already established in regard to Palestine sovereignty;

- We manifest our opposition regarding the militarist ideological maintenance and its war technology. We require that Brazil suspends the wide military cooperation of its companies with the Israeli State. Brazil is the fifth major importing country of Israeli weapons and collaborates with the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories. We protest against the military relations between Brazil and Israel. We denounce that this support to the Israeli war industry contradicts the Brazilian government's support to the creation of a Palestinian State according to the borders established in 1967. We also manifest our opposition to the participation of Israeli companies that give support to the invasion of Palestinian territory in the organization of the World Cup and Olympic Games to take place in Brazil.

A response of solidarity and hope

- We trust in God's liberating grace. We live the praxis of justice as intrinsic to grace. The experience of grace and dis-graces constitute the horizon of life of human freedom. The dis-graces are situated especially in the universe of the structures of oppression and grace is articulated with liberation. Grace liberates human freedom for the liberating commitment, for the praxis of justice, for the option for the poor. Grace provokes us to say no and to break away from the structures of oppression;

- We acknowledge the extraordinary impact of the new way of reading the Bible in Latin America as an exercise of rupture with the models of control of the altar and scholarship.



We are aware that we need to maintain the critical reading so that an idealized and naïve reading does not collaborate with the strategies of fundamentalist Zionisms and Christianisms. This brings us to acknowledge that, before being God of Israel, Yahweh was the God of Ishmael and Esau, the brothers who were set away in order not to disturb the blessing of the chosen ones; the same way Midian was set away, Ishmael's half brother, Abraham and Keturah's son (Gn 15, 1-6). In the lands of Midian, south of the desert of Paran, Moses will know that Abraham's, Isaac's and Jacob's Elohim, has another name, a name already known by the ones who were rejected, name already worshiped in the lands of Paran, Seir, Edom, Midian: its name is Yahweh! God of the Hebrews, of the hapirus, the marginalized, the ones who were considered bandits, Yahweh who shone in Paran, who thundered and rained in Seir, Ishmael's, Esau's Yahweh, of Edom, Midian, of all peoples! In the name of the peace and dialogue it is needed to recuperate the Hebrews' Yahweh, of the poor and oppressed, whether Jews, Arabs, Christians, black, white, women or men;

- During a long time the Bible served as a guide for the colonial domination in Latina America and still today we feel the consequences of Christendom allied to imperial power. We reject any pretension to the use of the Bible as a weapon of discrimination and justification for abuse, dispossession and subordination of the Palestinian people. We are committed with the critical reading and the overcoming of those readings and their cultural modes in our churches and communities;

- We renounce any pretension to Israel's exclusivity as the only elected people which would turn all of us into accomplices of the violent intentions of the State of Israel. All peoples are God's peoples. All are visited by God and form God's great People in history. For all peoples and their faith narratives the territory is promise and blessing and we want to be part of the *oikumene* in the construction of coexistence, respect and equality relations;

**Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O people of Israel? Says the Lord.
Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from
Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir? (Amos 9:7)**

- And, in the struggle to make concrete the humans rights we long for a Palestine without the destruction of the plurality and the relations among people. Plurality that cannot be dissolved, standardized, denied. We do not close our eyes and ears to what we are seeing and hearing, and taken by faith which does not allow us to be silent, we supplicate from a hope that the blood no longer be shed in Palestine, that weapons will no longer be fired. It is in this faith that we put ourselves alongside the suffering of each broken person. It is in this faith that we believe in the possibilities to overcome hatred, war, violence, since there is always space and time for the end of any kind of conflict;

- We consider the cause of the Palestinian people a cause of the whole humanity, a cause of God's kingdom. And we continue the walk with much hope, despite all the obstacles. We leave you with the subversive peace of the Gospel.

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Free Palestine Social Forum
Kairós Palestine Brazil