



September 3, 2022

**Message to the 11th World Council of Churches Assembly**

**from your Palestinian Christian Sister and Brothers and their Supporters**

We congratulate the World Council of Churches on the occasion of its 11th Assembly as it gathers member Protestant and Orthodox churches from around the world. We find that the Assembly theme, "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity," particularly speaks to our dire situation.

We Palestinian Christians in the USA and supporters write now with an urgent plea to all assembled churches and representatives to take courageous action now to achieve peace with justice and equality and dignity for all people in the Holy Land, from the river to the sea.

Our people are bleeding, suffering ethnic cleansing and a slow genocide. We call on the WCC Assembly to stand bravely on the right side of history. As you are probably aware, [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#) the world's two major international human rights organizations, recently reported that Israeli policies and practices towards the Palestinians meet the definition of apartheid under international law. Israel's own internationally respected human rights organization, [B'tselem](#) had earlier named these policies as apartheid, confirming the reports over decades from Palestinian human rights defenders and UN experts. The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. has also recognized that Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people during its recent general assembly.

We ask that the churches not look away as our children, women, and men languish and rot in Israeli jails, suffering humiliation and torture, often without charges or trials. We ask you to care when we are routinely evicted from our family homes—or they are demolished—to make way for Jewish settlers from Europe or North America. Moreover, people in Gaza are locked in an open-air prison under a 15-year-old siege and routinely bombarded. We are denied water for drinking and crops while illegal Israeli settlers imposed in our midst have enough water for swimming pools. Our young and old men, women, and children are terrorized and routinely murdered in cold blood by Israeli occupation forces. We remind you that the Israeli occupation force sniper that killed Palestinian Christian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in a targeted assassination has still not been brought to justice. Most recently, six Palestinian civil society organizations, including those documenting the occupation's human rights violations, were falsely and cynically accused of terrorism and shuttered.

While the world has tried to sideline the Palestinian situation, it is in fact at the root of much of the injustice and instability in the region. The world itself cannot know true peace if the Middle East continues to smolder with rights violations and conflict. As Christians, we are obliged to be peacemakers and to recognize that the foundation of peace is justice and dignity. Peace can never be achieved through its antithesis, which is violence and military action.



At this Assembly, you have the opportunity and obligation as Christians to stand with the oppressed, to follow in Jesus' footsteps in speaking truth to power. We call on the Assembly to:

1. Name and condemn Israeli apartheid against Palestinians and to bring to bear the same level of pressure and activism against Israeli apartheid as it did to South African apartheid.
2. Call for an end to Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, the West Bank including East Jerusalem and Gaza and an end to Israeli's occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights, upholding and endorsing relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention as it applies to Occupied Territories.
3. Call on all the WCC and its constituent churches to undertake a program of active advocacy for Palestinian human rights and freedom based on international law and UN resolutions that acknowledges the Palestinian call, including the Kairos Palestine Document, for Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) as an expression of free speech and a legitimate tool of non-violent resistance.
4. Expand eyewitness and pilgrimage opportunities to the Holy Land that center and honor the Palestinian experience and their ongoing oppression.
5. Recognize that attempts to purify any territory to ensure the supremacy and domination of one religious, national, or ethnic group over another constitutes a crime against humanity and a sin against God.
6. Impel the WCC and its constituent churches to educate their members and request their governments to work for freedom, equity and human rights for the Palestinian people, the only true route to peace with justice in the Holy Land that will bring equality, dignity, and security to all who live between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.
7. Ensure that the WCC organizes and funds a major international conference of churches and human rights organizations and defenders within the next two years to raise awareness about and develop advocacy strategies to bring about an end to Israeli apartheid and occupation.

We pray for the Holy Spirit to move your hearts to action and would welcome opportunities for dialogue and further engagement. Finally, we thank you for your kind attention and wish the Assembly success through the achievement of impactful outcomes.

Signed:

[Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace \(pcap-us.org\)](http://pcap-us.org)

Allied Groups: