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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Washington, D.C. - October 20, 2023

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**Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Condemns Attack Against
St. Porphyrius Greek Orthodox Church in Gaza**

October 20, 2023
Washington, D.C.

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) condemns the bombing of the St. Porphyrius Greek Orthodox Church in Gaza City. CMEP reiterates that even during times of active hostilities, all efforts must be made to protect religious institutions. CMEP has learned from contacts in Gaza that Christian leadership provided the coordinates of all Christian properties in Gaza to the Israeli government in the first days of the war. We stand alongside the [Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem](#) as they continue to offer humanitarian support and a place of refuge for all Palestinians in Gaza.

Formed in 1984, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of more than 30 national church communions and organizations, including Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelical traditions that works to encourage US policies that actively promote a comprehensive resolution to conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. CMEP works to mobilize US Christians to embrace a holistic perspective and to be advocates of equality, human rights, security, and justice for Israelis, Palestinians, and all people of the Middle East.

Previous CMEP statements about the Israel-Hamas War:

October 19, 2023: [CMEP Calls for a Ceasefire and Issues Desperate Plea: President Biden's Humanitarian Relief is Not Getting to People in Gaza.](#) While the United Nations reports the convoy includes [ready-to-eat food](#), development experts on the ground in Gaza have communicated to CMEP concerns that at least some of the food in the trucks waiting in convoy in Egypt would need to be cooked, requiring water, gas, and/or electricity to which displaced people in Gaza do not have access. . . . Water is

not getting to people in Southern Gaza because there is no electricity to pump water through the system and because there is so much damage to pipelines because of extensive bombing. [Read more.](#)

October 19, 2023: [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) affirms the October 17th statement of the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem](#), “mourning civilian victims of the massacre in Gaza and extending solidarity to the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.” CMEP issued a statement [expressing sadness and outrage](#) at the bombing of Al Ahli Hospital and agrees this attack is a “profound transgression against the very principles held by humanity.” We stand in solidarity with the churches of the Holy Land and the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and call for people to [respond through Prayer, Giving, and Action](#).

October 17, 2023: [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Expresses Sadness and Outrage at Bombing of Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza](#). Today, Christians around the world followed the call of the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem for a day of prayer and fasting for peace and reconciliation and an end to the war between Israel and Hamas. Even as we pray, we find ourselves confronting immense pain and a devastating death toll after the bombing of Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, an Anglican hospital in Gaza. Al-Ahli Arab Hospital has provided a critical and courageous ministry of health care provision to serve the people of Gaza for many years.

October 13, 2023: [CMEP Joins United Nations in Call Not to Ignore Gazans “Dying at the World’s Watch.”](#) CMEP and our member communions call for the world not to ignore the catastrophic crisis happening in Gaza.

October 13, 2023: [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Affirms Statement from Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem](#).

October 12, 2023: [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) joined 25 other Church-based denominations and organizations](#) in a letter to Congress to call for a ceasefire, restraint by all sides, protection of civilians, and release of hostages.

October 9, 2023: [CMEP Implores Restraint, De-escalation of Conflict, Humanitarian Access, and Addressing Core Issues of Conflict](#) Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) continues to grieve the devastating loss of life in Israel/Palestine. As the numbers of those killed and injured climb, we ask people of faith to remain committed to praying and working toward an immediate end to the violence. Yet, cessation of conflict will not automatically bring justice. Without attention to the core systemic issues of the war and the ongoing occupation of Palestinian territory, there will be no real peace. At a time when the rush by governments will be for more military responses, CMEP prays for the de-escalation of violence to prevail. We urge an escalation of diplomatic efforts by the United States, through the United Nations, and other regional bodies. Too many people are already grieving the loss of loved ones.

October 7, 2023: [CMEP Condemns All Acts of Violence, Calls for Prayer, and Implores Global Leaders to Address Core Issues of the War between Hamas and Israel](#): Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is deeply grieved by the news coming out of Israel and Gaza today. CMEP condemns all acts of violence against civilians that have occurred in the past twenty-four hours, as fighting has escalated between Hamas and Israel. As of late Saturday (EDT), reports indicated that hundreds have been killed and thousands wounded, both Israelis and Palestinians. CMEP mourns with the victims of the violence and their families.

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