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Christian Leaders commend Kerry's Efforts to Reach a Comprehensive Agreement to End Conflict

For the first time the Catholic, Coptic, Lutheran and Episcopal heads of churches in Jerusalem and the Franciscan Custodian of the Holy Places are joining with U.S. Christian denominations and groups to support urgent efforts to reach a comprehensive agreement to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Dear Mr. Secretary,

As Christian leaders, we commend you for your active efforts to reach a comprehensive agreement to end the long-standing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians with the mutual recognition, dignity, justice, and security that each side deserves.

Given the difficulties involved, a framework for conclusive negotiations seems an essential step if there is to be progress towards a final status agreement. Without progress now, we fear an important opportunity for peace will be lost.

Lack of a resolution will have negative consequences for both Israelis and Palestinians and exacerbate other grave problems in the region. Failure would have detrimental consequences for the entire international community, including the United States, as well as exacerbate ongoing humanitarian concerns. We hope that the framework will be based on principles of international law.

The preservation and welfare of the Christian communities affected by this conflict are important to us. A comprehensive agreement should greatly strengthen opportunities for them to flourish. Moreover, the support and inclusion of all three Abrahamic faiths is critical as they will have an important role to play in promoting the peace process.

Recalling the blessedness of peacemakers, we pray for your success and pledge to help you in every way we can in building a secure and just peace.

Most sincerely,

His Beatitude Fouad Twal
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa ofm
Custos of the Holy Land
Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land

His Grace Dr. Anba Abraham
Archbishop
Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem & the Near East

Rt. Rev. Dr. Munib A. Younan
Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

Rt. Rev. Suheil Dawani
Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem
Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East

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Council Minister
International Council of Community Churches

Rev. Geoffrey Black
General Minister and President
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Tony Campolo

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Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
Chairman of the Board, Catholic Relief Services

Rev. Dr. Tom De Vries
General Secretary
Reformed Church in America

Paula Dempsey
Director of Partnership Relations
Alliance of Baptists

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Very Rev. John Edmunds, ST
President
Conference of Major Superiors of Men

Adam Estle
Executive Director
Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding

Rev. Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley
Executive Secretary-Treasurer
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The Rev. David Guthrie
President, Provincial Elders' Conference
Moravian Church in America, Southern Province

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President
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Gerry Gardner Lee
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Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Dr. Ron Lush
President
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Cardinal Theodore McCarrick
Archbishop Emeritus of Washington

Reverend John L. McCullough
President and CEO
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Reverend Grady Parsons
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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Chairman
U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace

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Franciscan Friars (OFM) English Speaking Conference

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Executive Secretary
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President and Founder
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Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Bishop Rosemarie Wenner
President, Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

James Winkler
President and General Secretary
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