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CMEP Letter to Secretary Clinton Regarding Attacks on Iraqi Christians (November 1, 2010)

November 1, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Clinton,

We are distressed to learn about the devastating violence against Iraqi Christians that took place in Baghdad yesterday. Reports have indicated that nearly 60 people were killed in the siege and ensuing battle at Our Lady of Salvation Catholic Church. This most recent act of violence against Iraq's Christian population is a potent sign of the continuing challenges in fostering security for all Iraqis.

Churches for Middle East Peace condemns all violence directed against civilians, including Iraqis of all religions and ethnicities. Violence against minority populations creates additional concern because of their special vulnerability. While Christian communities represent one of the oldest faith traditions in Iraq, as many as 500,000 have fled the country or are internally displaced. Yesterday's violence will only serve to aggravate conditions for Christians and other minorities in Iraq and across the Middle East.

We stand in solidarity with all the people of Iraq in their suffering and with the Iraqi Christian community in this trying and tumultuous time. Churches for Middle East Peace is sending messages offering our prayers and support to churches and communities around Iraq.

Recognizing that religious division in Iraq has increased with the U.S. presence, we urge that U.S. policies seek in every way possible to reinforce the strong history of peaceful religious coexistence in Iraq. As U.S. forces withdraw, the United States has a moral responsibility to help Iraq rebuild in a way that upholds the lives, dignity and security of all its citizens.

Sincerely,

Martin Shupack
Board Chair

Warren Clark
Executive Director