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CMEP Affirms Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem responding to foreclosure against Armenian Patriarchate

20 Feb 2025 Washington D.C.- Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) stands in solidarity with the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem and their defense of the Armenian Patriarchate. The Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem faces a foreclosure order posing a significant threat to their ongoing sustainability. As the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches note, “This action undermines the freedom of religion, which is the foundation of all other rights, since through a confiscation of assets, attempts to the right of existence of the Orthodox Armenian Church, depriving it of the necessary economic resources to live and operate and depriving the local Armenian people of the pastoral care of their Church.” The threat against the Armenian Patriarchate reflects a broader challenge facing the Christian community in Jerusalem relating to taxation issues. CMEP remains committed to advocate for the continued sustainability of the churches in Jerusalem whose presence and ministry provide vital services to the greater community.

The full statement is available [here](#) and below



PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF LOCAL CHURCHES OF JERUSALEM

Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem Condemn Unjust Foreclosure Against Armenian Patriarchate, Urge Immediate Intervention Jerusalem – February 19, 2025

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."
(Matthew 5:6)

With great concern, we, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem, stand in steadfast solidarity with the Orthodox Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem in its pursuit of justice against an unjust foreclosure order issued by the Municipality of Jerusalem. The actions taken against the Arminian Patriarchate, based on an unverified and exorbitant Arnona Tax debt, are legally dubious and morally unacceptable.

It is inconceivable that Christian institutions, whose mission for centuries has been to safeguard faith, serve communities, and preserve the sacred heritage of the Holy Land, should now face the threat of property seizure under Israeli administrative measures that disregard due process. Particularly alarming is the municipality's attempt to enforce a debt determination without judicial scrutiny, and in defiance of the governmental committee established to negotiate such matters in good faith. This reckless move jeopardizes the Orthodox Armenian Patriarchate and sets a perilous precedent that could imperil Christian institutions throughout the Holy Land.

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"If one member suffers, all suffer together" (1 Corinthians 12:26). The targeting of one Church is an assault on all, and we cannot remain silent while the foundations of our Christian witness in the land of Christ's ministry are shaken. We call upon Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Interior Minister Moshe Arbel, and Minister Tzachi Hanegbi to immediately intervene, freeze all foreclosure proceedings, and ensure that negotiations resume within the above-mentioned governmental committee in order to reach to an amicable solution regarding this issue in the spirit of justice.

May righteousness prevail, and may the Holy Land remain a beacon of faith for generations to come.

+The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem+

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.

Recent CMEP Statements and Press Releases:

Feb 14, 2025: [CMEP Expresses Deep Concern Over Escalating Israeli Military Operations in the West Bank](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is deeply alarmed by the ongoing Israeli military operations in the West Bank, including the recent large-scale offensive, the most extensive since the Second Intifada. According to the United Nations, these operations have displaced over 40,000 Palestinians. Additionally, the destruction of 11 buildings in Masafer Yatta is part of a continued effort to forcibly remove Palestinian communities from their land, exacerbating an already dire humanitarian situation.

Feb 6, 2025: [CMEP Condemns President Trump's Call for the Forced Displacement of Palestinians from Gaza](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) vehemently opposes President Donald Trump's recent comments advocating for the forced removal of the Palestinian population from Gaza. This is an open call for ethnic cleansing and a blatant violation of international and humanitarian law, as well as a fundamental affront to the sanctity of human life. Additionally, such language further undermines the current ceasefire, which the Trump Administration worked hard to secure and is directly responsible for ensuring all parties continue to adhere to its tenants through the completion of phase three of the deal.

Jan 28, 2025 [Humanitarian Snapshot #9](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), along with dozens of international humanitarian organizations, urgently calls upon the international community to address the escalating humanitarian crisis in Gaza. This comes as findings reveal the failure to implement critical provisional measures outlined by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) a year ago, resulting in unprecedented suffering among Palestinians.

Jan 23, 2025 [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Calls for Deescalation, Demilitarization, and Support of Permanent Ceasefire and Lasting Peace between Israel and Hamas and in the broader Middle East.](#)

The inauguration of President Trump marked the beginning of his administration, with promises of peace and unity in his inaugural speech. However, his initial actions, such as lifting sanctions on Israeli settlers and reintroducing heavy weaponry to conflict zones, contradict these commitments, prioritizing militarization over diplomacy. CMEP urges the Trump Administration to uphold the Gaza ceasefire, promote justice, and address the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through non-violent means. CMEP also highlights ongoing violence in the West Bank, Gaza, and Lebanon, calling for accountability and the protection of innocent lives amid escalating tensions and violations of ceasefire agreements.

Jan 16, 2025 [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Welcomes Positive Steps Toward a Negotiated Settlement, Permanent Ceasefire in Gaza, and Calls for Accountability](#)

After more than 15 months of devastating violence in Gaza and throughout the region, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) welcomes with cautious optimism the recent announcement of a hostage and ceasefire agreement between Hamas and Israel. This long-overdue agreement brings a glimmer of hope that might end the suffering that has plagued Gaza for far too long, including the deaths of over 46,000 people and the devastation of famine and lack of humanitarian access. The Palestinian people of Gaza and all impacted by this ongoing violence deserve relief and the chance to rebuild their lives.

See all of our [public statements](#) and [press releases](#).

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