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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement: CMEP Calls for Protection of Syria's Christian Communities following a suicide attack on the Church of the Prophet Elias in Damascus in Damascus

June 23, 2025, Washington D.C.- Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) mourns the devastating suicide bombing that took place at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Prophet Elias in Damascus, Syria, on June 23, 2025. We stand in deep solidarity with Syria's Christian community—our brothers and sisters in Christ—who have endured generations of hardship, especially over the past 14 years of war, displacement, and persecution.

We lift our prayers for the victims and their families, and for the safety of all Christians in Syria who, despite enormous challenges, continue to courageously keep the faith alive in the very land where Jesus walked. The presence of the Christian community is a sacred and vital part of Syria's cultural and religious fabric. Christians and all minority groups must be protected.

CMEP calls on the United States and the international community to ensure that the Syrian transitional government is held accountable for the safety and security of all religious minorities, including Christians. These communities must be protected from

threats by actors such as ISIS and other extremist groups, but also from internal threats, including militias and elements affiliated with the transitional government itself. Since the fall of the Bashar al-Assad government, there has been a troubling rise in intimidation, harassment, and violence against the Christian population. This injustice must end.

We urge swift action to bring the perpetrators of this attack to justice. Furthermore, the full religious, cultural, and human rights of all Syrians must be protected and upheld equally. True peace and stability in Syria can only be achieved when every community is safe, free, and treated with dignity and respect.

Finally, we echo the statement issued by the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem which urges that all "leaders and people of goodwill to continue to denounce religious hatred, violence and degradation, while working to promote justice, peace, and reconciliation among people of any and all creeds and beliefs."

You can read their statement [HERE](#) or below.



PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF THE CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

STATEMENT ON THE ATTACK AT MAR ELIAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH IN DAMASCUS

June 23, 2025

On Sunday, June 22nd, as more than 150 clergy and faithful were gathered for worship at Mar Elias Greek Orthodox Church in Damascus, three attackers first shot at the church door before storming inside, with one finally blowing himself up as the other two fled. The explosion killed at least twenty-two worshipers and wounded 63 others while also causing extensive damage to the interior of the sacred worship space in an act of desecration.

We, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem, categorically condemn this heinous assault against our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and call upon the interim Syrian government to not only capture the escaped attackers and bring them to justice, but also to take extensive measures to protect the lives and religious freedoms of all Christians and other religious groups inside Syria.

Standing in unwavering solidarity with His Beatitude Patriarch John X Yazigi and those clergy and people under his pastoral care, we also extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and offer our prayers for healing and a speedy recovery to those who were wounded in this terrorist assault. May the Lord “heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds” (Psalm 147:3).

Lastly, we would like to gratefully acknowledge the expressions of support from religious and secular leaders, both locally and internationally, in the aftermath of this tragic event. We strongly urge all such leaders and people of goodwill to continue to denounce religious hatred, violence, and degradation, while working to promote justice, peace, and reconciliation among people of any and all creeds and beliefs.

—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:

[Jun 13, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Condemns Israeli Strikes Against Iran and Urges De-escalation of Regional Aggression](#)

CMEP condemns in the strongest possible terms Israel's recent attacks on Iran, including reported strikes near nuclear facilities and within civilian areas. These reckless and unlawful actions risk the lives of hundreds of millions of people across the Middle East and escalate the threat of a catastrophic regional war. We also call on Iran to cease its counterattacks against Israel. Military solutions are not the answer and will only cause more death, destruction, and harm. Such escalations not only cause civilian deaths but further destabilize the entire peace and security of the region.

[Jun 5, 2025: CMEP Condemns and Abhors the Attack on Al-Ahli Hospital and Calls for Accountability and Peace](#)

CMEP stands in solidarity with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and elevates its powerful statement condemning the Israeli military's attack on Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza City on June 5th, 2025. This egregious assault, resulting in the deaths of five individuals, including three journalists and a father escorting his injured child, and injuring dozens more, underscores the urgent need for the international community to uphold the protections afforded to medical facilities, journalists, and civilians under international humanitarian law.

[Jun 4, 2025: CMEP Elevates the Statement of Archbishop Elpidophoros on the Threat to the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine in Egypt](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) joins with His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, in expressing deep concern and sorrow over the recent judicial decision by Egyptian authorities that threatens the property and spiritual mission of the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. Elevates the Statement of Archbishop Elpidophoros press release.

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

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