CHURCHES FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

WORKING TOGETHER:
Justice Can Prevail. Peace Is Possible.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Joint Statement: As Mass Starvation Spreads Across Gaza, Our Colleagues and Those We Serve Are Wasting Away

More than 100 organizations are sounding the alarm to allow in life-saving aid.

July 23, 2025, Washington D.C.- Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) joins more than 100 humanitarian and human rights organizations in sounding the alarm over the catastrophic starvation crisis in Gaza. As part of this joint statement, CMEP urges governments to take immediate and decisive action to end Israel's siege, open all land crossings, restore the full flow of essential aid, and demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire. "The deliberate starvation of civilians as a weapon of war is unconscionable and a moral outrage," said Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, executive director of CMEP. "We call on the international community to act now to save lives before there are none left to save."

Find the full statement below:

As the Israeli government's siege starves the people of Gaza, aid workers are now joining the same food lines, risking being shot just to feed their families. With supplies now totally depleted, humanitarian organisations are witnessing their own colleagues and partners waste away before their eyes.

Exactly two months since the Israeli government-controlled scheme, the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, began operating, more than 100 organisations are sounding the alarm, urging governments to act: open all land crossings; restore the full flow of food, clean water, medical supplies, shelter items, and fuel through a principled, UN-led mechanism; end the siege, and agree to a ceasefire now.

"Each morning, the same question echoes across Gaza: will I eat today?" said one agency representative.

Massacres at food distribution sites in Gaza are occurring near-daily. As of July 13, the UN confirmed 875 Palestinians were killed while seeking food, 201 on aid routes and the rest at distribution points. Thousands more have been injured. Meanwhile, Israeli forces have forcibly displaced nearly two million exhausted Palestinians with the most recent mass displacement order issued on July 20, confining Palestinians to less than 12 per cent of Gaza. WFP warns that current conditions make operations untenable. The starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is a war crime.

Just outside Gaza, in warehouses - and even within Gaza itself - tons of food, clean water, medical supplies, shelter items and fuel sit untouched with humanitarian organisations blocked from accessing or delivering them. The Government of Israel's restrictions, delays, and fragmentation under its total siege have created chaos, starvation, and death. An aid worker providing psychosocial support spoke of the devastating impact on children: "Children tell their parents they want to go to heaven, because at least heaven has food."

Doctors report record rates of acute malnutrition, especially among children and older people. Illnesses like acute watery diarrhoea are spreading, markets are empty, waste is piling up, and adults are collapsing on the streets from hunger and dehydration. Distributions in Gaza average just 28 trucks a day, far from enough for over two million people, many of whom have gone weeks without assistance.

The UN-led humanitarian system has not failed, it has been prevented from functioning.

Humanitarian agencies have the capacity and supplies to respond at scale. But, with access denied, we are blocked from reaching those in need, including our own exhausted and starved teams. On July 10, the EU and Israel announced steps to scale up aid. But these promises of 'progress' ring hollow when there is no real change on the ground. Every day without a sustained flow means more people dying of preventable illnesses. Children starve while waiting for promises that never arrive.

Palestinians are trapped in a cycle of hope and heartbreak, waiting for assistance and ceasefires, only to wake up to worsening conditions. It is not just physical torment, but psychological. Survival is dangled like a mirage. The humanitarian system cannot run on false promises. Humanitarians cannot operate on shifting timelines or wait for political commitments that fail to deliver access.

Governments must stop waiting for permission to act. We cannot continue to hope that current arrangements will work. It is time to take decisive action: demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire; lift all bureaucratic and administrative restrictions; open all land crossings; ensure access to everyone in all of Gaza; reject military-controlled distribution models; restore a principled, UN-led humanitarian response and continue to fund principled and impartial humanitarian organisations. States must pursue concrete measures to end the siege, such as halting the transfer of weapons and ammunition.

Piecemeal arrangements and symbolic gestures, like airdrops or flawed aid deals, serve as a smokescreen for inaction. They cannot replace states' legal and moral obligations to protect Palestinian civilians and ensure meaningful access at scale. States can and must save lives before there are none left to save.

Signatories:

1. American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
2. A.M. Qattan Foundation
3. ANew Policy
4. ACT Alliance
5. Action Against Hunger (ACF)
6. Action for Humanity
7. ActionAid International
8. American Baptist Churches Palestine Justice Network
9. Amnesty International
10. Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz
11. Associazione Cooperazione e Solidarietà (ACS)
12. Bystanders No More
13. Campain
14. CARE
15. Caritas Germany
16. Caritas Internationalis
17. Caritas Jerusalem
18. Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)
19. Center for Mind-Body Medicine (CMBM)
20. CESVI Fondazione
21. Children Not Numbers
22. Christian Aid
23. Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)
24. CIDSE- International Family of Catholic Social Justice Organisations
25. Cooperazione Internazionale Sud Sud (CISS)
26. Council for Arab-British Understanding (CAABU)
27. DanChurchAid (DCA)
28. Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
29. Development and Peace – Caritas Canada
30. Doctors against Genocide
31. Episcopal Peace Fellowship
32. EuroMed Rights
33. Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
34. Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst e.V.
35. Gender Action for Peace and Security
36. Glia

37. Global Legal Action Network (GLAN)
38. Global Witness
39. Health Workers 4 Palestine
40. HelpAge International
41. Human Concern International
42. Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
43. Humanity First UK
44. Indiana Center for Middle East Peace
45. Insecurity Insight
46. International Media Support
47. International NGO Safety Organisation
48. Islamic Relief
49. Jahalin Solidarity
50. Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC)
51. Justice for All
52. Kenya Association of Muslim Medical Professionals (KAMMP)
53. Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
54. MedGlobal
55. Medico International
56. Medico International Switzerland (medico international schweiz)
57. Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)
58. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)
59. Medicine for the People - Belgium (MPLP/GVHV)
60. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)
61. Médecins du Monde France
62. Médecins du Monde Spain
63. Médecins du Monde Switzerland
64. Mercy Corps
65. Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA)
66. Movement for Peace (MPDL)
67. Muslim Aid
68. National Justice and Peace Network in England and Wales
69. Nonviolence International
70. Norwegian Aid Committee (NORWAC)
71. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
72. Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
73. Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
74. Oxfam International
75. Pax Christi England and Wales
76. Pax Christi International
77. Pax Christi Merseyside
78. Pax Christi USA
79. Pal Law Commission
80. Palestinian American Medical Association
81. Palestinian Children's Relief Fund (PCRF)
82. Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS)
83. Peace Direct
84. Peace Winds
85. Pediatricians for Palestine
86. People in Need
87. Plan International
88. Première Urgence Internationale (PUI)
89. Progettomondo
90. Project HOPE
91. Quaker Palestine Israel Network
92. Rebuilding Alliance
93. Refugees International
94. Saferworld

95. Sabeel-Kairos UK
96. Save the Children (SCI)
97. Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
98. Solidarités International
99. Støtteforeningen Det Danske Hus i Palæstina
100. Swiss Church Aid (HEKS/EPER)
101. Terre des Hommes Italia
102. Terre des Hommes Lausanne
103. Terre des Hommes Nederland
104. The Borgen Project
105. The Center for Mind-Body Medicine (CMBM)
106. The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCR2P)
107. The International Development and Relief Foundation
108. The Institute for the Understanding of Anti-Palestinian Racism
109. Un Ponte Per (UPP)
110. United Against Inhumanity (UAI)
111. War Child Alliance
112. War Child UK
113. War on Want
114. Weltfriedensdienst e.V.
115. Welthungerhilfe (WHH)

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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:

July 17, 2025: CMEP Condemns Attack on Gaza's Holy Family Catholic Church, Calls for Immediate Ceasefire and Protection of All Civilians and Religious Sites

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) denounces in the strongest possible terms the Israeli military attack today on the Holy Family Catholic Church in Gaza City, the only Catholic church in Gaza. The strike killed at least three civilians and caused extensive damage to the parish complex, which has been sheltering approximately 700 displaced civilians, mostly children, since the beginning of the war. This most recent attack marks the sixth assault on churches in Gaza since October 2023. Each of these attacks is in clear violation of international law, as humanitarian refuges and holy sites are both protected, and an attack on human dignity and freedom of worship.

July 16, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Condemns the Israeli Plan to Forcibly Relocate Palestinians to Camps in Rafah

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) rejects the Israeli government's plan to forcibly establish humanitarian camps atop the ruins of the city of Rafah. This proposal would displace and confine more than 600,000 Palestinians, restricting their freedom of movement and removing them from Gaza. Forced displacement is a clear violation of international law. CMEP calls upon the global church, the international community, and the U.S. government to hold the Israeli government accountable and stop the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

July 15, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Condemns the Killing of Palestinian-American Sayfollah Musallet

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) condemns the violent July 11, 2025 settler attack in the West Bank. Tragically, Sayfollah Musallet, a 20-year-old Palestinian American, and Mohammad Shalabi, a 23-year-old Palestinian were brutally killed. This deadly settler attack is not an isolated incident. Attacks in the

West Bank have only been increasing, leading to the deaths of at least 7 American citizens. CMEP demands accountability, justice, and the immediate launch of an investigation by the American government.

July 14, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Elevates Statement by the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches of Jerusalem Regarding the Latest Settler Attack on Taybeh
Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) elevates the recent statement made by the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches of Jerusalem condemning the latest settler attack against the Christian community of Taybeh. We mourn the lives lost and the homes and churches burned. Intimidation and violence against Christian communities in the Holy Land has been steadily increasing due to intensified Israeli efforts to establish settlements. CMEP urges the international community to act against these atrocities and support the continued presence of Christians in the Holy Land.

July 9, 2025: CMEP Condemns the Israeli Settler Attack Against the Palestinian Christian Village of Taybeh
Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) condemns the most recent attack by Israeli settlers on the Palestinian Christian village of Taybeh, where on July 7, 2025, settlers deliberately set fire near the town cemetery and the historic Church of Saint George, dating back to the 5th century. This violent act, thwarted only by the intervention of local residents and firefighters, is part of what local Christian clergy describe as “a series of dangerous, systematic attacks” against the village’s land, holy sites, and people. Taybeh, historically known as Ephraim, is the last entirely Christian town in the West Bank, and these assaults represent not only a grave threat to its security but a direct effort to undermine the Christian presence in the Holy Land.

See all of our public statements and press releases.

Contact Us

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