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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Calls for Respect of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church and Recognition of its Independence from Government Interference

December 9, 2025, Washington, D.C.-

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) expresses profound concern about recent developments affecting the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church, a sacred institution central to the spiritual and cultural life of the Armenian people for more than 1,500 years.

Throughout history, the Armenian Orthodox Church has stood as a pillar of endurance and faith, guiding the Armenian people through persecution, displacement, and periods of foreign occupation. Even in the darkest moments, the Church's witness and leadership sustained the nation's identity, hope, and moral strength in Armenia and for its diaspora congregants around the world.

In light of the Church's historic and ongoing role, CMEP urges full respect for the Armenian Apostolic Church's independence and internal governance vis-à-vis the Armenian State. Matters concerning the election of the Catholicos of All Armenians or the discipline of clergy should remain within the Church's own canonical processes, free from external interference and secular political influences and interventions.

CMEP also calls for the release of members of the clergy who have been detained and encourages all parties to act in ways that promote peace, dignity, and reconciliation within Armenian society.

The separation of Church and State is an essential element of any functioning democracy. The Armenian Apostolic Church must be allowed to continue its sacred mission of addressing the spiritual needs of the nation without political pressure or interference. We call for the release of all political prisoners who are held unjustly, including the Armenian Prisoners of War (POW) held by Azerbaijan.

CMEP stands in solidarity with all who seek to preserve the holiness, independence, and integrity of the Armenian Orthodox Church as it continues to serve the Armenian people and witness to the love and justice of God in the world.

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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:

[Nov 17, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) upon the Release of Kairos Palestine 2](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) acknowledges the release of Kairos Palestine 2 as a profound theological testimony written in the rubble of Gaza, in the dust of demolished homes, in the tears of mothers, and in the refugee camps of Palestine. It is a theology of the cross, born of suffering, endurance, and deep faith, yet also a theology of hope: faith and love from the heart of suffering. As we receive this new Kairos Document, we do so with humility and sobriety. We hear the pain, the longing for liberation, and the steadfast conviction that justice and peace are aligned with God's purposes for the holy land. We also recognize that Kairos Palestine 2 challenges all of us, especially churches and Christians in the West, to confront unjust systems that deny human liberty and freedom.

[Nov 12, 2025: Joint Statement by U.S. Organizations concerning the potential inclusion of Azerbaijan in the planned International Security Force for Gaza](#)

We, the below-listed U.S. nongovernmental organizations are deeply concerned by media reports that the International Security Force (ISF) planned for Gaza under President Trump's 20-Point Plan may include a military contingent from Azerbaijan, and urge the United States and other partners to

reject such a presence. International third party security or peacekeeping forces can be an important element of post-conflict stabilization, but as the performance of certain militaries operating under the MONUSCO mission in Congo and the MINUSTAH mission in Haiti demonstrate, it is vital that such forces bring both impartiality and a track record of respect for human rights.

[Nov 4, 2025: 2025 Multi-Faith Global Letter](#)

We, leaders representing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, come together united by the profound belief that all human beings are created in the image of God. In this conviction, we affirm the inherent dignity, equality, and worth of every person, regardless of religion, nationality, or ethnicity. This belief calls us to speak with urgency, compassion, and moral clarity in response to the ongoing devastation in Gaza and the broader Middle East.

[Nov 4, 2025: CMEP's Cover Letter to the 2025 Multi-Faith Global Letter](#)

Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Leaders Demand Intervention, Accountability, an End to the Atrocities in Gaza and the West Bank, and an End to All Violence.

[Oct 20, 2025: Joint Statement: US Sanctions on Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Erodes International Law](#)

As organizations committed to civil society and open civic space, we, the undersigned, are gravely concerned by the U.S. government's (USG) decision to impose sanctions under Executive Order (EO) 14203 against three leading Palestinian human rights organizations — Al-Haq: Law in the Service of Man (Al-Haq), Al Mezan Center for Human Rights (Al-Mezan), and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) — for engaging with the International Criminal Court (ICC) to seek investigations into war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza. These sanctions create a chilling effect on humanitarian and human rights work in Gaza and undermine the abilities of civil society actors to pursue accountability under international law.

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

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