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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington, D.C. - June 18, 2026

CMEP Welcomes U.S.-Iran Memorandum of Understanding and Calls for Comprehensive Regional Peace

June 18, 2026, Washington D.C.- Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) welcomes the recently announced Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Iran as a possible first step toward a broader and more durable peace in the Middle East.

For far too long, the peoples of the region have borne the devastating consequences of war, military escalation, displacement, and political instability. This agreement must mark the beginning of a comprehensive diplomatic process that will halt violence across the region and create the conditions necessary for a just and lasting peace.

CMEP has consistently maintained that there is no military solution to the challenges facing the Middle East. Lasting security cannot be achieved through bombs, occupations, or cycles of retaliation. Rather, stability will only come when governments and political leaders choose diplomacy, dialogue, and negotiation over violence and war. We therefore urge all parties to engage in sustained diplomatic efforts that address not only immediate security concerns but also the deeper political and humanitarian issues that continue to fuel conflict throughout the region.

We caution against viewing this agreement as a success before tangible changes occur on the ground. The people of the Middle East have witnessed too many ceasefires, agreements, and diplomatic announcements that failed to produce meaningful improvements in the lives of ordinary people. The true measure of this memorandum will be whether hostilities cease, civilian lives are protected, and all parties uphold their commitments.

In particular, CMEP calls for an end to ongoing Israeli military attacks in Lebanon and for all parties to fully cease hostilities. Any agreement aimed at regional de-escalation must be accompanied by robust mechanisms for implementation and enforcement.

This moment should also encourage renewed efforts to end violence elsewhere in the region, including in Gaza and throughout Palestine and Israel. We continue to call for the protection of

civilians, the unrestricted delivery of humanitarian assistance, the release unlawfully detained individuals, and diplomatic initiatives that address the root causes of conflict and injustice.

Without accountability and sustained international engagement, violence too often resumes and civilians once again pay the highest price. As diplomatic efforts move forward, CMEP urges Members of Congress to support the Lebanon and Iran War Powers Resolutions. These measures represent important tools for reinforcing the constitutional role of Congress in decisions related to military engagement and for signaling continued support for diplomacy over further escalation. At a time when negotiations have opened a pathway away from war, Congress should act to strengthen diplomatic efforts and help prevent the United States from becoming further entangled in regional conflict.

As Christians, we believe that every person is created in the image of God and that peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, dignity, and security for all people. We pray that this agreement becomes the first step toward a comprehensive and permanent peace that ends violence across the Middle East and allows all who call the region home to live in safety, freedom, and hope.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

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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:

[Jun 15, 2026: Churches for Middle East Peace Elevates the Statement of the Lutheran Church and Expresses Concern Over the Arrest of Four Palestinian University Students](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) joins Bishop Dr. Imad Haddad and The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) in expressing deep concern over the arbitrary arrest of four Palestinian female university students in the occupied West Bank, including Joulan Abu Awwad, Sama Safi, Laila Khalil, and ELCJHL youth Natalie Abu Diya.

[June 5, 2026: CMEP is deeply alarmed by the recent arrest and detention of four Palestinian university students by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is deeply alarmed by the recent arrest and detention of four Palestinian university students by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank, including Birzeit University student Natalie Abu Diya, a Palestinian Christian and member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Beit Jala.

[April 27, 2026: Joint Freedom Day Statement Calls for Global Solidarity, Truth-Telling, Unity, and Justice Across Continents](#)

On Freedom Day in South Africa, commemorating the end of apartheid and the birth of a democratic nation, a coalition of Christian leaders and institutions issued a joint statement linking the legacy of South Africa's liberation struggle to urgent global calls for justice Palestine and Israel. The statement was released by the Reformed Church in America (RCA), Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) and the South African Council of Churches (SACC), together with our ecumenical partners, the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA) and the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC).

[Apr 24, 2026: CMEP Statement on the 111th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide](#)

On this solemn 111th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) joins with communities around the world in remembrance of the 1.5 million Armenians who were systematically killed and displaced beginning in 1915. We honor the memory of those who perished, stand with their descendants, and reaffirm our commitment to truth, justice, and the dignity of all people.

[Apr 13, 2026: Statement from Churches for Middle East Peace on the Interconnectedness of Violence](#)

At Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), we recognize that the violence unfolding across the Middle East is not isolated from the rest of the world. The grief, fear, and trauma felt in Gaza and the West Bank, Israel, Lebanon, Iran, and across the region are also experienced by diaspora communities around the globe, including here in the United States. Many Americans have family members, loved ones, and deep ties to the Middle East. As they watch tragedy and destruction unfold from afar, they too suffer.

Contact Us

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)

110 Maryland Ave NE, Suite 505

Washington, District of Columbia 20002

(202) 543-1222 info@cmepe.org

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