

kaĩros íreland



*that justice and peace
might embrace*

(based on Psalm 85:10)

*a call to íreland from palestinían
chrístians*

Enough for everyone

The photo on the front cover of the five loaves and fishes is from the High Cross of Moone, County Kildare. The fish depicted are of a Middle Eastern species and reflect the strong links between Coptic and Celtic Christian experience in the ninth century.

In the gospel story of Jesus feeding the multitude there was enough for everyone and to spare. (Mt 14:13-21, Mk 6:30-44, Lk 9:10-17, Jn 6:1-14). With a spirit of justice and generosity may this also be true in our day?



The old city of Jerusalem is home to the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It is a sacred place for both Jews and Arabs.

PREFACE

Christians in Palestine and Israel have called for solidarity by believers and people of good-will throughout the world in their struggle against apartheid and injustice under Israeli occupation. We in Kairos Ireland now re-publish a 2017 letter from a collective of Palestinian Christian organisations. We then react to the challenge of the 2009 Kairos Palestine call for action by Church leaders in Jerusalem.

Our intention is to let the voice of Palestinian Christians be heard in Ireland and to call on Irish people (North and South) to respond to that call for solidarity. Our prayer is for justice and peace for Palestinians and Israelis and for an end to the brutality of military occupation. All of us can respond at a personal level as well as call on our governments to play a constructive part in the search for true peace where, as Psalm 85 has it, 'righteousness and peace will kiss each other.'



Greek Catholic Melkite Church in the Old City of Jerusalem

Open letter from The National Coalition of Christian Organizations in Palestine (NCCOP) to the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement

Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. (Isa. 1:17)

Background

As we meet this month in Bethlehem in occupied Palestine, we are still suffering from 100 years of injustice and oppression that were inflicted on the Palestinian people beginning with the unjust and unlawful Balfour declaration, intensified through the *Nakba* and the influx of refugees, followed by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank including East Jerusalem and Gaza and the fragmentation of our people and our land through policies of isolation and confiscation of land, and the building of Jewish-only settlements and the Apartheid Wall.

We are still suffering because of one political declaration from a Western Empire, based on a twisted theological premise. Even some churches and few Christian leaders supported the establishment of the colonial state in our land, and totally ignored – even dehumanized – the nation, our people that had already existed here for centuries and paid the price for atrocities committed in Europe.

Hundred years later with thousands of lives lost, towns and villages razed from the face of the earth – though not our memory –, millions of refugees, thousands of homes demolished and continued incarceration of prisoners, our *Nakba* goes on.

Hundred years later and there is still no justice in our land! Discrimination and inequality, military occupation and systematic oppression are the rule. Today, we stand in front of an impasse and we have reached a deadlock. Despite all the promises, endless summits, UN resolutions, religious and lay leader's callings – Palestinians are still yearning for their freedom and independence and seeking

justice and equality. Humanly speaking – we have reached the “moment of impossible”, as Emeritus Latin Patriarch Sabbah said recently.

Could it be that we have reached this “impossible moment” because things were built from the very beginning – a hundred years ago – on an unjust premise? Should we expect that such an unjust declaration will create anything but strife and destruction?

Today is also an opportunity to remember the *Amman Call** which was proclaimed ten years ago. We are thankful to those who stood with us back then in costly solidarity; those who stood for truth and justice. We are also concerned that ten years later the situation has been worsening on the ground and still deteriorating. Like other initiatives advocating end of occupation, the *Amman Call* did not achieve its goals in building and achieving just peace and we must ask ourselves today – why?

We are also concerned by Israel’s systemic assault on Palestinian creative resistance, and on our partners worldwide who use this method to pressure Israel to end the occupation. Many new laws were issued in Israel and around the world to oppose this creative non-violent resistance unlawfully, and to stop all effort towards peace. Not only is this an attack on the freedom of conscience and speech but it is also an assault on our right and duty to resist evil with good. Israel is even now trying to prevent pilgrims from visiting Bethlehem – the city of Emmanuel!

While we are grateful for the ‘costly solidarity’ articulated in the *Amman Call* and exercised by many churches around the world, we are concerned that some churches have weakened their positions in the last ten years as a result of this manipulating pressure. Many still hide behind the cover of political neutrality, not wishing to offend their religious dialogue partners.

Finally, we meet in an environment of religious wars and persecution in our region. Religious extremism is on the rise, and religious minorities have paid a heavy and painful price. We thank you for your efforts towards the refugees and towards ending the conflicts in our region. We also thank you for your support of persecuted Christians in places like Iraq and Syria.

Our Call

“God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.” (Matthew 5:6)

“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness (Justice), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me”. (Matthew 5:10-11)

As we stand in front of this “impossible moment”, it gives us no pleasure to say that “we told you so” eight years ago when we declared the moment as a *Kairos* moment! We stand facing the impossible, but we have not lost hope, since as followers of the Risen One, we are the people of hope. However, we need you and we need you now more than ever. We need your costly solidarity. We need brave women and men who are willing to stand in the forefront. This is no time for shallow diplomacy Christians. We urge you to hear our call and adopt the following:

1. That you **call things as they are**: recognize Israel as an apartheid state in terms of international law and in agreement of what a person like Desmond Tutu said and as the UN ESCWA report said: "Israel is guilty of imposing an apartheid regime on the Palestinian people". We are disturbed by the fact that States and churches are dealing with Israel as if the situation were normal, ignoring the reality of occupation, discrimination and daily death in the land. Just as churches united to end apartheid in South Africa and whereby the WCC played a courageous and pivotal prophetic and leadership role, we expect you to do the same!
2. That you **unequivocally condemn the Balfour declaration as unjust**, and that you demand from the UK that it asks forgiveness from the Palestinian people and compensates for the losses. We ask that churches and Christians to support the Palestinians in their request for justice. It was his infamous declaration, after all that laid the ground for the concept of an ethno-religious state – the very same thing our region is suffering today.
3. That you take a clear and the strongest theological stand against any theology or Christian group that justifies the occupation and privileges one nation over the other based on ethnicity or a covenant. We ask that you adopt and **live the theology suggested by Kairos Palestine** and that you organize conferences to bring awareness towards this end.
4. That you **take a stand against religious extremism** and against any attempt to create a religious state in our land or region. We ask that you support us in combating the foundations of extremism and that you seek our council when acting against religious extremism so that you do not jeopardize and harm our standing here.
5. That you revisit and **challenge your religious dialogue partners**, and that you are willing to even withdraw from the partnership if needed – if the occupation and injustices in Palestine and Israel are not challenged.
6. That you **lead campaigns for church leaders and pilgrims to visit Bethlehem** and other Palestinian cities on this side of the wall in cooperation with Palestinian tourist and pilgrimage agencies, in response to recent attempts by Israel. We ask that you publicly challenge any attempt by Israel or other Christians that discourage pilgrims from visiting Palestinian places.
7. That you **defend our right and duty to resist the occupation creatively and non-violently**. We ask that you speak in support of economic measures that pressure Israel to stop the occupation and go further to support sport, cultural and academic measures against Israel until it complies with international law and UN resolutions urging the ending of its occupation, Apartheid and discriminations, and accepts refugees to return to their home land and properties. This is our last peaceful resort. In response to Israel's war on BDS, we ask that you intensify that measures.
8. That you **create lobby groups in defence of Palestinian Christians**. We ask that you publicly and legally challenge Christian organizations that discredit our work and legitimacy.
9. We therefore propose as a matter of the greatest urgency that you create a strategic program within WCC similar to the Program "To Combat Racism" to lead efforts to lobby, advocate and develop active programs towards justice and peace in Palestine and Israel and work on **maintaining the presence of the Palestinian Christians** through supporting their organizations, church work and peaceful efforts.

As faithful witnesses, we acknowledge, affirm and continue the long-standing prophetic tradition, especially the one started by the [Amman Call](#) (a document of the World Council of Churches that was issued after an international peace conference held in Jordan in 2007) and articulated in the Kairos Palestine document. We fully grasp the pressure church leaders are facing here and abroad not to speak the truth, and it is because of this that we are raising this call.

Things are beyond urgent. We are on the verge of a catastrophic collapse. The current status-quo is unsustainable. This could be our last chance to achieve a just peace. As a Palestinian Christian community, this could be our last opportunity to save the Christian presence in this land. Our only hope as Christians comes from the fact that in Jerusalem, the city of God, and our city, there is an empty tomb, and Jesus Christ who triumphed over death and sin, brought to us and to all humanity, new life.

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. (2 Cor. 4:8-9)

Signatories to the open letter from the National Coalition of Christian Organisations in Palestine (NCCOP) to the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement.

Jerusalem

- Arab Catholic Scouts Group
- Arab Orthodox Society – Jerusalem
- Caritas- Jerusalem
- Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees- Middle East Council of Churches
- Greek Catholic Sayedat Al Bishara Association
- International Christian Committee
- Laity Committee in the Holy Land
- National Christian Association
- Pontifical Mission Palestine
- SABEEL – Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center
- Seeds of Better life
- Union of Arab Orthodox Club – Jerusalem
- Young Men's Christian Association – YMCA
- Young Women's Christian Association –YWCA

Gaza

NECC office
Bethlehem (NCOB)

Network of Christian Organizations in Bethlehem

- The East Jerusalem YMCA /Beit Sahour Branch
- The Arab Educational Institute,
- Holy Land Trust, Bethlehem
- Wi'am Center, Bethlehem
- Saint Afram Assyrian Society,
- Holy Land Christians Ecumenical Foundation, Bethlehem
- Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI)
- Arab Orthodox Club, Beit Sahour
- Arab Orthodox Club, Beit Jala
- Arab Orthodox Club, Bethlehem
- The Arab Orthodox Charitable Society, Beit Sahour
- Bethlehem Bible College
- Siraj Center for Holy Land Studies
- Alternative Tourism Group, ATG, Beit Sahour
- Senior Citizen Charitable Society
- Environmental educational Center, Beit Jala
- Saint Vincent Charitable Society, Beit Jala
- Shepherds' Children Society, Beit Sahour

KAIROS PALESTINE
20 June 2017



View from Dominus Flevit Church, Mount of Olives

THAT JUSTICE AND PEACE MIGHT EMBRACE

INTRODUCTION

In 2009 the leaders of thirteen Orthodox, Coptic, Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran churches in Jerusalem published the Kairos Palestine document (www.kairospalestine.ps) offering a theological analysis and a call for international action with regard to the ongoing occupation by Israel of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. Kairos Palestine drew upon the experience of the South African Kairos Document of 1985, which called for a prophetic response to the injustices of apartheid South Africa and for an end to unjust rule. In turn the South African Kairos Document was inspired by the 1934 Barmen Declaration when Lutheran, Reformed and United Church members of the German Confessing Church movement rejected the ideological claims of the Nazi State and asserted that Jesus Christ alone is the Word of God. In a similar way Kairos Palestine calls on churches and civil society

Kairos in ancient Greek means a propitious moment for decision or action. Literally Kairos translates as opportunity. Kairos is used 86 times in the New Testament. One example is Mark 1:15 *'The proper time has been fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has drawn near; change your hearts and have faith in the good tidings.'* (David Bentley Hart, 2017, A translation of the New Testament)

around the world to stand in solidarity with people living under occupation in Palestine and to take positive action to bring an end to the occupation and work for a just and peaceful resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Kairos Palestine forcefully describes the situation under which Palestinians live as 'apartheid' and calls for economic pressure to be applied through boycott, disinvestment and sanctions as non-violent action to bring about positive change as it helped to do in

South Africa. Several countries have made responses to Kairos Palestine including South Africa, Canada, Netherlands, Philippines, Germany, India, Brazil, United States of America and Britain (see contact list on page 25).

A very useful summary of the recent history of Israel/Palestine is given by 'The Palestinian – Israeli Conflict' in the Very Short Introduction series, Oxford University Press (2013) by Canadian academic Martin Bunton. The dates below highlight some of the significant events in the history of the conflict.

1897 – First Zionist Congress in Basel organised by Theodor Herzl
1917 – The Balfour Declaration promising a 'national home' for the Jews in Palestine
1917 – 1948 – British Mandate rule in Palestine following World War One
1947 – The UN partition plan to divide the province into Israel and Palestine
1948 – Independence declared by Israel – mass expulsion of Palestinians by Israel
1967 – The six-day war leading to the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank by Israel
1973 – The Yom Kippur war between Israel and Egypt and Syria
1987 – The first Palestinian Intifada (uprising) against Israeli occupation
1993/95 – Oslo Peace Process creating the Palestinian Authority in parts of Occupied Palestine
2000 – Beginning of the second intifada
2007 – Blockade of Gaza begins

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES TO KAIROS PALESTINE

Kairos USA begins with a confession of sin against Palestinians in Israel, Palestine and Gaza and calls on the USA to end its massive subsidies to the state of Israel (kairosusa.org). Kairos Britain (kairosbritain.org.uk) addresses the question of past British imperial interests in the region and the 100-year old Balfour Declaration, which laid the foundations for the unresolved conflict between Israel and Palestine.

The Irish perspective is different. We do not share the imperial guilt of Britain or the biased support for Israel by the USA. Indeed, in Ireland, Arthur James Balfour is remembered as 'Bloody Balfour' because of his harsh tactics when as Chief Secretary for Ireland (1887-1891) he repressed the Irish Land League tenant farmers movement. Nevertheless, there are Irish interests in Israel and Palestine through trade links and the EU; our concern for justice and peace; our own experience of conflict and identity politics; involvement in United Nations peace missions and religious sentiment for the 'Holy Land'. Many church groups from the north and south of Ireland visit the 'Holy Land' every year. We also note that the sixth President of modern Israel, Chaim Herzog, was born in Belfast and grew up in Dublin.

We must remember that the larger 'mainstream' churches in Ireland are all-island bodies that predate the Irish border. This means that the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist churches and their ecumenical agencies relate to the two governments in London and Dublin when lobbying on foreign policy. The Catholic Bishop's Conference in Ireland relates to Dublin and equivalent Catholic bodies in the UK relate to Westminster.

A RESPONSE FROM IRELAND

We, in Kairos Ireland, are a group of people from church and trade union backgrounds on an all-Ireland basis who have a concern for justice in Israel and Palestine. We long for an end to the occupation of Palestinian Territory by Israel that began in 1967 and the possibility of a new peaceful future in which people of all backgrounds have equal rights and opportunities. We hope to see justice and freedom for Palestinians as well as peace and security for Israel. We know from the experience of divided communities in Ireland that violence does not heal and restore broken relationships. Some of us have served in human rights initiatives in Palestine and Israel, or have been on fact finding visits, or are just motivated by concern for a conflict that threatens the peace of the region and the wider world. We invite all people of good will to join with us in the search for a just solution where Jews, Christians and Muslims and other minority traditions can live together in harmony. We challenge churches in Ireland to confront what the recent open letter to the World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Movement (at the beginning of this document) describes as the 'twisted theology' that justifies continuing Israeli military repression in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). We reject the notion of privilege on the grounds of ethnicity or a misunderstanding of Biblical concepts such as Promise and Covenant. This letter from a wide range of Palestinian Christians stresses the urgency of a global response as the spiral of violence and despair deepens among Palestinians living in Israel and Palestine and as the settlements encroach inch-by-inch on Palestinian farmlands.

1 SOME THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To Christians in the 21st century, promises about the land of Israel shouldn't be intended to be taken literally, or as applying to a defined geographical territory; they are a way of speaking about how to live under God so that justice and peace reign, the weak and poor are protected, the stranger is included, and all have a share in the community and a contribution to make to it. The 'promised land' in the Bible is not a place, so much as a metaphor of how things ought to be among the people of God. This 'promised land' can be found – or built – anywhere.

Church of Scotland, "The inheritance of Abraham? A Report on the 'Promised Land'" rev. version (May 17, 2013)

The theological essay in the Kairos Palestine Netherlands by Reverend Henri Veldhuis discusses the various meanings of the name Israel. It started out as the name for Jacob after the mystical experience at the ford of Jabbok (Genesis 32:22-32) and was then applied to the political kingdom of David and Solomon. This was followed by Israel becoming the name for the northern Hebrew kingdom after the split with the southern kingdom of Judah and finally it became the name for a community of faith. Modern Israel is a nineteenth century nationalist construct named after an archaic historic entity in the same way that Zimbabwe and Ghana are named after historic kingdoms that ceased to exist long ago. According to Henri Veldhuis 'The promised land is where people live by the Torah. No nationalistic claims can be laid on it.'

Canadian historian Professor Donald Akenson argues that the Jewish settlers in Israel have what he calls a 'Covenantal mind set'. By this he means that they believe that they are chosen by a powerful deity to occupy a sacred land and that the indigenous people of the land are profane and can be pushed aside. This comes from a fundamentalist and selective reading of the mid-bronze age covenants described in the Pentateuch. This mind set is becoming ever more entrenched as colonisation proceeds through Jewish settlements in the West Bank known by them as 'Judea and Samaria' and which they believe is the fulfilment of biblical prophecy.

Writing from his stance of Palestinian Liberation Theology, Canon **Naim Stifan Ateek** contrasts the exclusive and essentially sectarian texts of the Old Testament with the inclusive texts that are more in accord with a Christian understanding of the Old Testament. (Ateek, 2017, A Palestinian Theology of Liberation). Ateek points out that for Christians, Jesus is the key to interpreting the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible). Old Testament passages that contradict Jesus' inclusive message of love and reconciliation have no authority for us. Such passages include:



- Numbers 33:50-53 [...you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you...], with its claim of divine sanction for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine;
- or the tearing apart of 'mixed' marriages (Nehemiah 13:23-31 and Ezra 9 & 10);
- or the vengeful exclusion of Ammonites and Moabites (Deut 23:3-4, 6);

- or the command to annihilate the Canaanites (Deut 20:16-18) [...*annihilate them – the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites...*]
- and specifically the Amalekites (Deut 25:17-19) [...*you shall blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven...*].

When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. (Lev 19:33-34)

We believe that the thrust of the prophet's message taken from the Old Testament scriptures, which Christians share with Jews, is a call to justice and righteous living. (Micah 6:8) [*what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God*]. Biblical texts that seem to justify genocide and human rights abuse (Josh ch 1-11 and the passages referenced above) are not compatible with the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

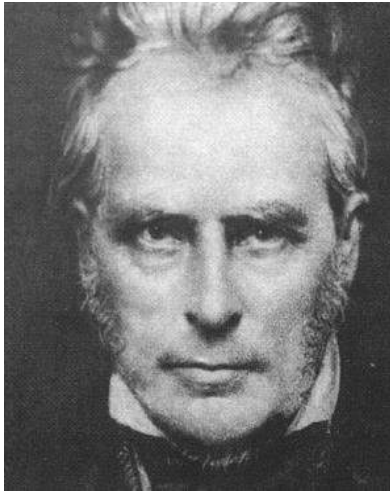
We note from the inclusive texts of the Old Testament, eg Genesis 12:3, that Abraham is blessed in order to be a blessing to all the families on earth and that strangers are to be honoured [*You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt*] (Exodus 22:21). In Ezekiel (Ezek 47:21-23) there was to be an equal distribution of the land between Jews and resident aliens, who were to be regarded as citizens of Israel. Leviticus (Lev 19:33-34) also emphasizes the point that aliens are to be equal citizens. The vision of the prophets (Isaiah 2:2-4 and Micah 4:1-4) is that Zion is a symbol for international peace and reconciliation. The Old Testament contains many different traditions that have been edited together by scholars with a variety of interests. While there certainly are exclusive texts, there are also eirenic and inclusive texts and it is the latter that are in accord with a Christian understanding of the scriptures.



The Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem, constructed by Herod the Great c20-17 BCE, is the focus of Jewish prayer and pilgrimage

The extra-ordinary stories of Ruth and Jonah are a theological rejection of chauvinistic nationalism and emphasize that God's concern and care extends to all people even those who are perceived as the enemy, such as the Moabites and Assyrians. The American Old Testament scholar Walter Bruggemann argues that the biblical land promises were included in a fifth century BC revision as Jewish exiles returned to Jerusalem from Babylon and struggled to re-establish a vibrant community. With Henri Veldhuis, we believe that

‘Israeli occupation-politics are also destroying the soul of the Jewish people’ as well as damaging the lives of those who are subjected to occupation’.



Christian Zionism, which offers strident support for modern Israel, has its roots in the Biblical interpretations of **John Nelson Darby**, whose Anglo-Irish landed seat was based at Leap Castle in County Offaly. Darby served for a time as a Church of Ireland Rector in Calary (near Delgany), County Wicklow, before going on to help found the Plymouth Brethren sect and then the Exclusive Brethren. From his reading of Scripture, he developed the ‘dispensationalist’ scheme of distinct ages in God’s dealings with fallen humanity. This has attracted a wide following, particularly in the United States of America, and has morphed into an uncritical support for Zionist Israel as part of an ‘end-times’

scenario. These Christian Zionists believe that the ‘return’ of Jews to Israel, rebuilding the Temple and the conversion of Jews to Christ will initiate the final battle between good and evil, the second coming of Christ and the ‘Rapture’, when the ‘saved’ are assumed into heaven. Such beliefs lie behind the decision of the United States of America in 2017 to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to move the embassy of the USA to Jerusalem.

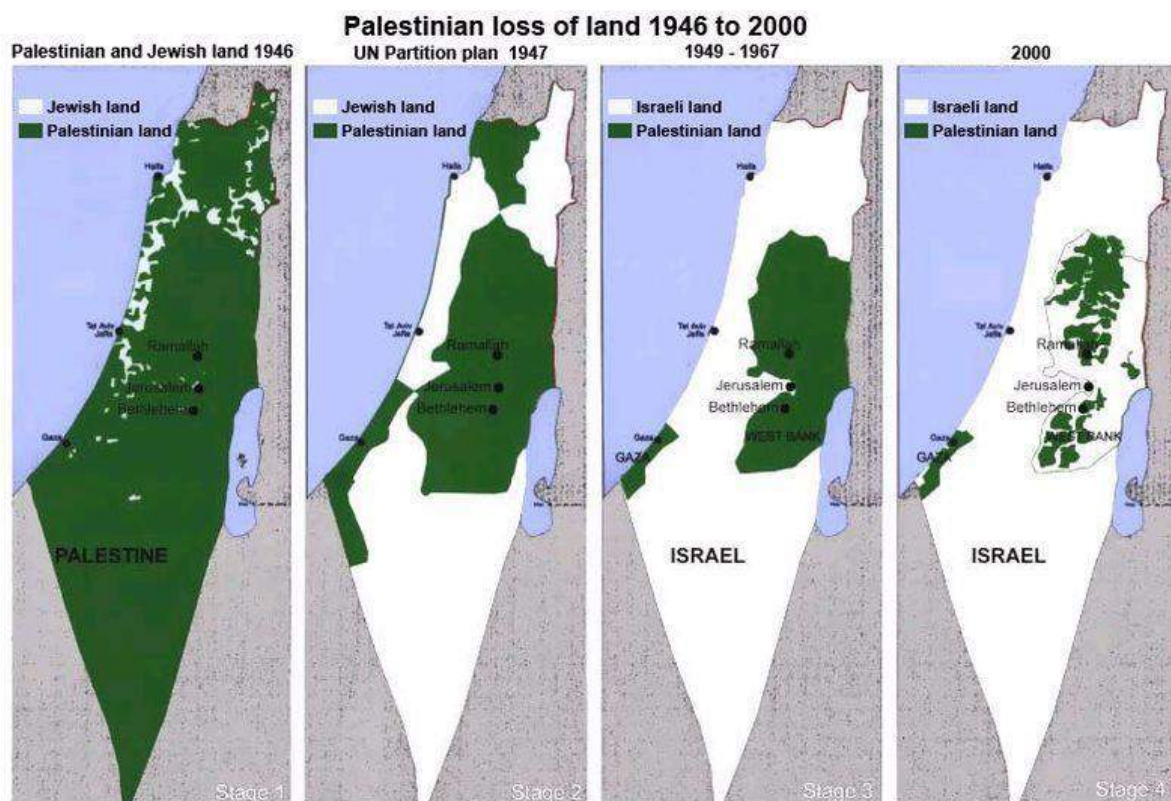
We believe that Christian Zionism is a modern-day heresy in the same way that Apartheid was rejected by the original Kairos movement in South Africa. We affirm the statement of Kairos Palestine that Jerusalem is ‘inhabited by two peoples of three faiths’ and that it does not belong to any one tradition. The UN plan of 1947 designated Jerusalem as an international city. The exclusive claim by modern Israel to possess the city as its unique, undivided and eternal capital damages the search for peace.

2 HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

The state of Israel was declared on the 14th May 1948 followed by a war in which the Jewish forces defeated military forces from several neighbouring countries. Under a United Nations plan of 1947, Israel had been allocated 55% of Mandate Palestine even though at the time Jews were only one third of the population and owned 7% of the land. However, after the war, Israel controlled 78% of the province [see maps in diagram]. Israel received widespread international recognition and was included within the structures of international bodies such as the United Nations. Of the Palestinian areas, the West Bank and East Jerusalem was governed by the Kingdom of Jordan, while the Gaza Strip was governed by Egypt. Following the ‘Six Day War’ of 1967, Israel occupied these two territories and remains as the occupying power some 50 years later. Although Israel subsequently withdrew from its settlements in the Gaza strip, the continuing blockade and control of the area amounts to an ongoing occupation and is recognised as such by the [United Nations](#).

Under the terms of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which regulates the protection of civilians in occupied Territory, there are strict rules applied to an occupying power. The occupation shall only be temporary and for strict military necessity. The occupying power shall not transfer its own population onto the occupied land. The occupying power shall act in the best interest of the occupied population and shall protect the natural resources in the occupied area for the benefit of the local population.

Israel has violated all these rules even though it signed the convention in 1951. Through the settlement building programme possibly up to 700,000 Jewish Israelis have moved onto Palestinian lands in East Jerusalem and rural areas of the West Bank. Israel has appropriated Palestinian natural resources, notably water and agricultural land. Israeli settlers often supported by the Israeli IDF army have demolished large numbers of Palestinian dwellings, animal shelters and olive trees. Israel has transferred large numbers of Palestinian prisoners from the occupied territory into Israel, which is another violation of international law. Israel attempts to evade the charge that it is illegally occupying 'Palestinian' land by arguing that they are occupying 'disputed territory' formerly claimed by Jordan and Egypt, and as these countries no longer claim these lands then Israeli is not bound by the Geneva Convention. Only Israel is persuaded by this perverse [interpretation of law](#).



Another major area of concern is the separation barrier, which Israel claims is to protect its citizens against terrorist attack from Palestinian areas. If this barrier were constructed on the 1949 'green line' (the old border) the argument of defence might be accepted but the barrier is often on confiscated Palestinian land and encloses about 10% of the West Bank with valuable aquifers (water resources). This arrangement creates huge difficulties for Palestinian farmers who are cut off from their lands and find it hard to carry on working

their land, as well as disrupting health, education and community life for Palestinians. The route of the separation barrier has been ruled to be illegal by the [International Court of Justice](#).

The real question is why Israel is allowed to get away with this breaking of international law on a continuing basis for over forty years?

Sanctions have been applied to Russia following the occupation of the Crimea. So why are sanctions not applied to Israel in the same way? Instead of sanctions, Israel benefits from EU research funding and massive US aid for budget support and military spending. We believe sanctions should be applied to Israel to encourage Israel to end its illegal occupation as the Kairos Palestine document asks. We urge both the British and Irish governments to press the EU to end financial and economic cooperation with Israel whilst it remains in illegal occupation of lands taken by them in 1967. We are particularly interested in developing an effective campaign to end the EU-Israel Association Agreement. The agreement grants Israel preferential access to European markets, allows Israeli ministries and weapons companies to receive EU funding and provides Israel with the political support it needs to carry out its crimes against the Palestinian people. This comes in violation of Article 2 of the Agreement which states that: "Relations between the Parties...shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles..." Despite Israel's clear violation of the Article 2 clause, the continued application of the [EU-Israel Association Agreement](#) fosters an environment of impunity and tolerance towards Israel's crimes.

3 STRUCTURAL INJUSTICE

Speaking in Dublin, a former Deputy Secretary of the United Nations, Dr Rima Khalaf-Hunaidi referred to a scholarly report commissioned by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. It provides overwhelming evidence that Israel has established an apartheid regime that oppresses and dominates Palestinians as a whole whether in Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territory or the refugee diaspora.

A few examples illustrate the point. Over 90% of land in Israel is classed as state land and is for the exclusive use of Jews. Under the Israeli Law of Return, any Jew, from anywhere in the world, may 'return' to Israel, whether they have any previous connection with the region or not.

On the other hand, Palestinians may not return even though their families have strong links with areas like Haifa or Jaffa or lived there before the 1948 Nakba expulsion from their homes.

In the occupied Territory the age of criminal responsibility for Israeli settler children is 14 years and any trials are in a civilian court. For Palestinians, the age of criminal responsibility is 12 years and children are tried in military courts where there is a 99.7% conviction rate. Israel in fact is the only country in the world where children – and only Palestinian children – are routinely tried before military courts. As a 2013 UNICEF report concluded: *Ill-treatment*

of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalised. (See additional information in box below)

Ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalised. This conclusion is based on the repeated allegations about such treatment over the past 10 years and the volume, consistency and persistence of these allegations. The review of cases documented through the monitoring and reporting mechanism on grave child rights violations, as well as interviews conducted by UNICEF with Israeli and Palestinian lawyers and Palestinian children, also support this conclusion. The pattern of ill-treatment includes the arrest of children at their homes between midnight and 5:00 am by heavily armed soldiers; the practice of blindfolding children and tying their hands with plastic ties; physical and verbal abuse during transfer to an interrogation site, including the use of painful restraints; lack of access to water, food, toilet facilities and medical care; interrogation using physical violence and threats; coerced confessions; and lack of access to lawyers or family members during interrogation. Treatment inconsistent with child rights continues during court appearances, including shackling of children; denial of bail and imposition of custodial sentences; and transfer of children outside occupied Palestinian territory to serve their sentences inside Israel. The incarceration isolates them from their families and interrupts their studies. These practices are in violation of international law that protects children against ill-treatment when in contact with law enforcement, military and judicial institutions.

UNICEF report: Children in Israeli Military Detention 2013

On average in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Palestinians are allocated one sixth of the water allocated to Israeli citizens. We also note that in Israel there is discrimination against Palestinian Israelis in the distribution of resources, services and jobs. All of this amounts to discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. Sadly, due to pressure from the United States and other member states, the UN Secretariat distanced itself from [the report](#).

South African anti-apartheid activist the Reverend Brian Brown, whose family migrated from Ireland, points out that Hendrik Verwoerd, the architect of South African apartheid, had no doubt that Israel was also an apartheid state. Verwoerd stated, 'Jews took Israel from Arabs after Arabs had lived there for a thousand years. Israel, like South Africa, is an apartheid state' ('Born to be Free' 2015, p 352). Verwoerd complained that while Israel's policies of dispossessing Palestinians of land, nationality and human rights replicated apartheid, Israel escaped international censure. The projects in South Africa and Israel were essentially the same, namely to take as much of the land as possible with as few of the indigenous people as possible. Palestine has been slowly losing land inch-by-inch particularly since the occupation of the West Bank following the war of 1967.

The passing into law of the [Jewish Nation-State Bill](#) on 19th July 2018 further underlines the ethno-religious and undemocratic shift taking place in modern Israel. Seventy years after the founding of Israel, the Bill stipulates that: 'Israel is the historic homeland of the Jewish people and they have an exclusive right to national self-determination in it'. The Bill also refers to, 'the development of Jewish settlement as a national value and will act to encourage and promote its establishment'.



The early morning scene at Tarqumiya Check Point: West Bank Palestinians with work permits crowd through the barriers from 3am onwards in order to get to work in Israel.

This is in marked contrast to the declared intention from the declaration of the establishment of the state of Israel, which says that Israel will, 'ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex...' [The declaration](#) goes on to say that Israel will, 'guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations'. These ideals have never been honoured by Israel but the promise of equality and respect for all the inhabitants is still shared by many Israelis today who are aghast at how quickly its own democracy is being undermined by the religious orthodox right wing.

4 ECONOMIC PRESSURE

In Kairos Palestine, Palestinian church leaders state that they 'see boycott and disinvestment as tools of non-violence for justice, peace and security for all'. During the international campaign against Apartheid South Africa the boycott of South African products played a significant role in hastening political change among the Afrikaner political elite. The actions of the Dunnes strikers in Dublin in 1984 eventually led to an official ban on the importation of South African goods into the Republic of Ireland.



East Jerusalem - Dome of the Rock with the Palestinian neighbourhood of At Tur beyond. A large Israeli flag to the right of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Ascension marks a settlement house.

On 11th July 2018 a private members bill sponsored by Senator Frances Black was debated in the Seanad (the Senate - upper chamber of the Irish parliament) and progressed to a second reading. The Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territory) Bill 2018 aims to ban imports from illegal Israeli settlements that are built on stolen Palestinian land. This is a clear signal to Israel that international law must be upheld and that genuine peace can only come about when the party with overwhelming military power stops abusing that power. We hope that this Bill will offer a lead that other EU countries will follow. That the Israeli government has established a well-funded department to counter the effect of the BDS campaign is evidence of its effectiveness. Economic, cultural and sports measures need to be intensified in order to bring home to Israel the seriousness of the international community in opposing their apartheid policies.

Regarding faith institutions, one recalls the principled stance of radical Irish Presbyterians in the eighteenth century who, as an act of solidarity, refused to eat sugar produced by slave labour in the Caribbean. In our day the USA Jewish Voice for Peace supports 'divestment from and boycott of companies that profit from Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem'. The British Society of Friends (Quakers), the United Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church in the United States have already taken steps to divest from companies that benefit from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. Similarly, Canadian Mennonites and the United Church of Canada have passed resolutions in their

respective assemblies calling for a boycott of products from Israeli Settlements located within occupied Palestinian territory. We urge Irish churches to look at their own ethical investment portfolios and to withdraw investments connected with the Israeli Occupation of Palestine. At an individual level in the face of Israeli unwillingness to identify occupation produce, we encourage people not to buy fruit and vegetables labelled as 'produce of Israel', which more than likely are grown on stolen land in the Jordan Valley with Palestinian water resources taken in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

5 POLITICAL ACTION

In 2015 the Dáil (Dublin parliament) passed a motion to 'officially recognise the state of Palestine on the basis of the 1949 borders with East Jerusalem as the capital, as established in UN resolutions.' This was intended as a further positive contribution to securing a negotiated two-state settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which many believe still continues to offer the best long-term political solution. However, with settlement expansion breaking up the territorial integrity of the West Bank there is increasing doubt about the viability of a two-state solution. Nonetheless, we believe that the Irish and British governments can and should recognise Palestine as an independent state, following the example of Sweden, rather than wait for unanimous EU agreement on this matter. The ultimate shape of the political structures in Israel and Palestine is for the people who live



Palestinian protesters sit in the blade of an Israeli bulldozer at Khan al-Ahmar, a Bedouin village threatened with demolition. It is east of the Jewish settlement of Ma'ale Adumim on the road to Jericho and will take back more West Bank territory into direct Israeli control. Photo: EAPPI

there to determine. We view the continuing expansion of settlements, the destruction of Bedouin and pastoral communities in Area C of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the unhelpful bias of the United States of America as grave impediments to the two-state solution. Increasingly there is an argument for a one state solution, but it is difficult to see how both Arab and Jew could enjoy equal rights and responsibilities regardless of ethnicity or religious affiliation without clear structural arrangements of a federal nature.

We believe that it is not too late for the international community to create a new peace process to negotiate an agreed settlement of all final status issues. We call on people of faith in Ireland to support new efforts to find a just solution. We note that the Oslo accords coming out of discussions between Israel and the PLO (1993-95) have failed. The Oslo Accords introduced a 'Temporary division of the West Bank into three areas:

- Area A (Palestinian urban centres) were under full Palestinian Authority (PA) control;
- Area B (major Palestinian villages) were under PA civic control and Israeli security control;
- Area C was under full Israeli control.

It was proposed that control of the entire West Bank would be transferred to the Palestinian Authority over a five-year period. Over twenty years later Israel remains in control of over 60% of the territory (Area C) with continuing land confiscation, settlement expansion and demolition of Palestinian homes and businesses. Martin Bunton correctly states, 'Israel's actions during this period (after 1995) made Oslo look to many Palestinians like a trap, reminiscent of the South African Bantustans'.

In 2016 Natalie Grove from the UN Office of the High Commission is reported as speaking to the Knesset about a '[highly coercive environment that forces Palestinians to leave](#)' Area C. The same report gives as examples of coercion, poor access to education and health provision; not being connected to water and electricity networks; lack of access to planning permission; and designation of 70% of Area C as State Land and therefore out of bounds for Palestinians. Between 2009-2013 of 2000 planning applications for building by Palestinians only 34 were granted. In 2015 none were granted. At the same time Israeli Settler homes are being constructed at a rate of 1500 per year. A report from 2013 by the Israeli organisation [B'Tselem](#) further details how much of Area C is designated as 'State Land' and 'Firing Zones' (military training areas); denial of basic infrastructure; diversion of water resources to settlers whilst Palestinian water tankers and cisterns are confiscated; lack of planning permission and demolition of Palestinian homes. Entire Bedouin villages in E1 east of Jerusalem and pastoral communities in the South Hebron Hills are scheduled for demolition to make way for settlement expansion.

[Speaking in Dublin](#) in November 2017 Hugh Lovatt of the European Council on Foreign Relations made some helpful observations on how Ireland and the EU can promote the political environment that would send a message to the people of Israel that the needs of Palestinians must be acknowledged in a new dispensation similar to what happened in South Africa. These suggestions included:

- Obtain compensation from Israel for its demolition and confiscation of EU humanitarian projects in Area C (that part of the occupied West Bank totally controlled by Israel).
- Prohibit the import of Israeli products originating in the settlements.
- Impose targeted sanctions upon persons and entities providing support to or benefitting from Israel's unlawful practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including its illegal annexation of Palestinian territory.

In the current situation of stalemate and where the Palestinians have been denied an avenue for exploring political solutions that could lead to negotiation, we believe the time has come for positive moral and political action by the Irish and British governments to revisit this catastrophe. Ireland has a significant leadership role to play as a small neutral state which can share the lessons of building a peace process over many years that finally achieved a historic negotiated agreement. Britain has the challenge of returning to the aims of the Balfour Declaration that promised respect for the rights of the Palestinian people alongside a homeland for the Jewish people.



Mounted Israeli police ride into a Palestinian crowd trying to reach the Muslim Holy Places in Al Quds/Jerusalem during Ramadan 2016. Photo EAPPI

SHARING OUR EXPERIENCE

In an island such as ours with a history of bitter divisions and the misuse of power over land, religion and identity, we acknowledge that we are involved in an unfinished search for peace and reconciliation. We can, however, share our own experience of our own imperfect search. We are aware that many different groups from Israel and Palestine visit Ireland to learn about the peace process here. We support those individual Palestinians and Israelis and organisations that work for a shared future, where people of different identities can live

together with respect and justice based on international law. Such peacemakers and bridge builders often face misunderstanding from their own communities and we commend them for their commitment and courage.

From our own experience we know how deeply ingrained memories of past injuries can harden fears and attitudes that prevent movement towards a shared future. We acknowledge the shameful history of European anti-Semitism that contributed to the development of political Zionism in the nineteenth century. At the time of their greatest need for solidarity in the 1930's Ireland along with other countries failed European Jews. Ireland in common with other western democracies such as Britain, the USA and Canada had a very restrictive policy on granting visas to Jews seeking to escape persecution in Nazi Germany in the 1930's. Whilst Britain allowed access for more refugees after 'Kristallnacht' in November 1938, partly due to public pressure, Ireland did not relent. However, Palestinians cannot be held responsible for past European anti-semitism but they are paying the price for it.

We applaud the condemnation of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in the Kairos Palestine document. We are mindful of the tragedies of the Holocaust when six million Jews were murdered in Nazi dominated Europe. We are also mindful of the Nakba (catastrophe) of 1948 when three quarters of a million Palestinians 'fled in fear or were driven out by force from their country because of the brutal onslaught of the Zionist militias.' (Ateek, 2017). Hundreds of Palestinians villages were then erased from the map. We do not believe that

'...only an end to the occupation and a just peace with the Palestinians will offer security to Israel and release its people from the weight of anxiety that hangs on them'.

Pope Benedict – quoted in the 2007 ICJSA report

these tragedies justify continuing violence and injustice today. Nor do we believe that it is anti-Semitic to condemn the actions of the present Israeli Government in the creeping colonisation of occupied Palestinian land, the demolition of Palestinians homes and the illegal appropriation of resources in occupied Palestine. Rather we believe that we are calling on Israel to be faithful to the best traditions of Judaism

expressed in the call of the prophets for peace and justice for all people. We recognise that Israel needs peace and security as much as Palestinians need justice and an end to occupation.

While international interest in the Israel-Palestine conflict has been somewhat eclipsed by other convulsions in a troubled region, such as Syria, Iraq and Yemen, it remains as an unhealed wound of injustice and is used as an excuse for extremism. The presence of nuclear weapons in the arsenal of Israel and their capacity to deliver them is a continuing threat to regional and world peace. A just settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict would not only be good for the people directly affected but also for the rest of the world. Perhaps the 'Holy Land' may yet become a place where: 'Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; and righteousness and peace will kiss each other.' (Psalm 85:10). People in Ireland can be partners in that search.

6 COME AND SEE

Many Catholic and Protestant church groups visit the 'Holy Land' each year as religious tourists. Palestinian Christians plead that such groups not only visit historic churches and archaeological sites but also encounter the 'living stones': Christian communities whose origins go back to the foundation of the Christian faith. To this end it is important that pilgrimage groups from Ireland stay in Bethlehem as well as in Jerusalem and visit other places in the West Bank such as Jericho, Nablus and Hebron, where the impact of a small number of extremist settlers on the lives of Palestinians is particularly acute. The economy of Bethlehem, a major Christian community, has been seriously impacted as tourism is reduced to day trips by coach from Jerusalem. Pilgrimage groups should resist attempts by the Israeli authorities to limit the time spent in Bethlehem to a few hours. We suggest that visiting groups should employ Palestinian tour guides and meet Palestinians, as well as using Israeli tour guides. If tourists have not had the opportunity to experience the daily reality of those who live there, and to see the 'separation barrier', the check points or the stolen Christian land in the beautiful Cremisan Valley then they have not had a full experience of Bethlehem.



Pilgrims at Tabgha at the Sea of Galilee looking across to the Golan heights. This is beside the Church of the Multiplication where Jesus placed the five loaves and two fish on a rock turning it into an altar.

For smaller groups there are more adventurous possibilities:

- political tours,
- Bedouin walking trails into the desert,
- olive harvesting in land threatened by illegal Israeli settlers,
- long-distance walking tours.

Palestinian Christians ask that visitors look at the 'Holy Land' with both eyes open and encounter the current reality. Several western churches have offices in Jerusalem, which together with the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) can enable meetings with local groups so that visitors can see the current situation for themselves.

In the past, there have been visits to the region by Irish church leaders, through regular Catholic Bishops visits, involvement in Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) fact

finding missions and through ecumenical visits such as that by the then heads of Irish Churches in 2008: Cardinal Sean Brady (Catholic), Robert Cooper (Methodist), John Findlay (Presbyterian) and Archbishop Alan Harper (Church of Ireland). Such visits encourage local people and churches in the region and raise awareness back in Ireland. The Church of Ireland Archdiocese of Dublin and Glendalough currently has [a partnership](#) with the Anglican Archdiocese of Jerusalem.



The Separation barrier cutting off Palestinian land in the Cremisan Valley (Beit Jala-Bethlehem). The flyover road was originally for settlers only but is now open to yellow plated (Israeli registered) cars.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. We call on Irish churches and concerned individuals to hear the Kairos Palestine message and to respond to it.
2. We urge that 'Holy Land' pilgrimage tours be undertaken according to principles of ethical tourism which support the Palestinian as well as the Israeli economy.
3. We challenge Christians to look again at theological concepts such as 'promised land', pointing out that this is a metaphor for right relationships between people rather than support for a particular nation state.
4. We call on the British and Irish governments to uphold principles of international law with regard to the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel. In particular we call for the recognition of Palestine and for a restructuring of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.
5. We call on Churches to examine their ethical investments policies to ensure that businesses and individuals that benefit from the illegal occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank are not rewarded.
6. We call on individuals to personally boycott occupation goods and produce.
7. We call on people in Ireland to support initiatives for justice and peace in Palestine and Israel.
8. We urge support for people and agencies that are part of the search for justice and peace based on international law, numerous UN resolutions calling for an end to the occupation and Biblical principles of solidarity and inclusion.
9. We call upon our governments to press for an end to the blockade of Gaza and for access to the essential services and supplies that will allow for a dignified standard of life and hope for the future.

APPENDIX – useful addresses and references

Palestinian Human Rights Organisations

Addameer – Palestinian prisoners support organisation www.addameer.org

Al Haq – non-government human rights organisation www.alhaq.org

Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ) www.arij.org

Arab Educational Institute (AEI)
www.aeicenter.org

Badil www.badil.org

BDS Movement www.bdsmovement.net

Defence for Children International – Palestinian Section www.dci-pal.org

International Centre for Bethlehem
www.annadwa.org/Con_Speeches.htm

International Middle East Media Centre
www.imemc.org

Joint Advocacy initiative (JAI) of the East Jerusalem YMCA www.jai-pal.org

Kairos Palestine www.kairospalestine.ps

Palestine Centre for Human Rights
www.pchrgaza.org

Palestine Bible Society www.pbs-web.com

Sabeel – Ecumenical liberation theology centre www.sabeel.org

Stop the Wall www.stophewall.org

Week for Peace in Palestine/Israel
www.worldweekforpeace.org

Wi'am – conflict resolution and transformation centre www.alaslah.org/

Israeli Human Rights organisations

Adalah www.adalah.org

Alternative Information Centre (AIC)
www.alternativenews.org

Arab Association for Human Rights (HRA)
www.arab.org/HRA/Pages/index.aspx

Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI)
www.acri.org.il/en/

Breaking the silence – testimony by soldiers of their time in the Occupied Palestinian Territory www.breakingthesilence.org.il/

B'Tselem – information for human rights in the Occupied Territories www.btselem.org

Coalition of Women for Peace
www.coalitionofwomen.org/?lang=en

Combatants for Peace www.cfpeace.org

Gisha www.gisha.org

Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions
www.icahd.org

New Profile www.newprofile.org/english

Physicians for Human Rights – Israel
www.phr.org.il

Rabbis for Human Rights rhr.org.il/eng/

Who Profits – Reports on the exports and businesses that profit from the settlements and the occupation www.whoprofits.org

Zochrot www.zochrot.org/en

International and Irish organisations

Amos Trust www.amostrust.org

Amnesty international www.amnesty.org.ir

Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT)
www.caat.org.uk/resouces/countrioes/israel

Christian Aid Ireland – Protestant Churches ecumenical relief and development agency. Belfast office – belfast@christian-aid.org Ph. 028 9064 8133. Dublin office - dublin@christian-aid.org Phone – 01 496

7040. www.christianaid.ie/about-us/.../Israel-and-palestinian-Territory-iopt

Christian Peacemaker teams (CPT)
www.cpt.org/work/palestine

Church of Scotland – The inheritance of Abraham – a report on the ‘promised land’
www.churchofscotland.org.uk

Corporate Watch www.corporatewatch.org

Drones Campaign Network
dronecampaignnetwork.wordpress.com



Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) www.eappi.org

EAPPI UK/Ireland office
www.quaker.org.uk/eappi

ETUN – European Trade Union Initiative for Justice in Palestine www.etun-palestine.org

Embrace the Middle East
www.embraceme.org

FODIP (Forum for Discussion of Palestine and Israel) www.fodip.org

Friends of Sabeel UK
www.friendsofsabeel.org.uk

Hadeel www.hadeel.org

ICAHD UK Israeli committee against house demolitions www.icahtuk.org-UKsupporters

International Solidarity Movement
www.palsolidarity.org

European Coordination Of Committees And Associations For Palestine -
<http://www.eccpalestine.org>

Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign –
www.ipsc.ie

Kairos Britain <http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk>

Kairos USA <https://kairosusa.org>

Kairos Palestine Netherlands <https://kairos-sabeel.nl>

Methodist Church Report & Regional Office
www.methodist.org.uk/mission/world-church/middle-east

Palestine Solidarity Campaign
www.palestinecampaign.org

Pax Christi UK
www.paxchristi.org.uk/wall1.php

Peace People <http://www.peacepeople.com>

Sadaka The Ireland Palestine Alliance –
www.sadaka.ie

Trade Union Friends of Palestine (Ireland)
<https://www.ictu.ie/globalsolidarity/palestine/trade-union-friends-of-pa.html>

Trees for life
www.olivecoop.com/stage/category/treesforlife

Trocaire – official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland.
www.trocaire.org/wherewework/opt-israel

Travel to Israel and occupied Palestine (and take action)

Short study tours to understand the situation by meeting people on both sides of the conflict and looking at aspects of life today in Israel and occupied Palestine are organised by:

From Ireland:

West Bank Tours - Elaine Daly in Dublin organises excellent West Bank study tours on a non-profit basis. <http://westbanktrips.com/>

Trade Union Friends of Palestine – Specialist tours arranged, particularly for educational and trade union groups. Contact your trade union or Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Space to Breathe & Peace Pilgrimages: Engagement programmes between Irish & British, and Palestinian and Israeli young people. www.youthspirit.co.uk

email – julian.hamilton@irishmethodist.org



Entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

From the UK:

Experience Travel Tours (advertised by Jews for Justice for Palestinians) -

http://jfjfp.com/?page_id=793 or email info@experiencetraveltours.org

The Amos Trust - a UK-based NGO which supports a number of Palestinian orgs and also arranges short exposure trips:
<http://www.amostrust.org/travel/index.php?pageNo=757&parent=101>

Political Tours -

<https://www.politicaltours.com/>. Runs short tours particularly designed for groups to meet political actors on either side of the conflict.

Travel2Palestine – a non-profit UK-based company running short exposure visits
<https://travel2palestine.org/>

In Israel/Palestine:

Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange
- specialist tours arranged, particularly for

educational and trade union groups: <http://pace.ps/about/>

Alternative Tourism Group - based in the West Bank: <http://www.atg.ps/>

Holy Land Trust – Bethlehem-based organisation running a selection of ‘exposure’ visits:

<http://www.holylandtrust.org/index.php>

Sabeel – the liberation theology centre in Jerusalem, www.sabeel.org. Their annual Youth Conference is in July they arrange ‘witness’ visits too, usually in the autumn.

Particularly good for younger people:

Palestine Summer Encounter -

<https://travelandencounter.holylandtrust.org>

This is a programme run by the Middle East Fellowship, a US based non-profit organisation, in conjunction with the Holy Land Trust (below) mainly for young people. They accept applications from the UK through Stuart Jennings: 07989 579858 or s.jennings@coventry.ac.uk

Siraj Centre in Bethlehem - organises summer camps each year -

<http://www.sirajcenter.org/> - Bethlehem-based organisation welcoming volunteers

Sabeel’s Youth conferences -

<https://sabeel.org/conferences-2/>

Longer summer/work camps, voluntary placements or shorter olive picking trips are organised by the following:

Zaytoun - www.zaytoun.org

Olive Co-operative - www.olivecoop.com

ICAHD - Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

<http://www.icahd.org/tours/extended-study%20> (UK Chapter: <http://uk.icahd.org/>)

Joint Advocacy Initiative, a Palestinian-based NGO, organises various tours, including every year for youth leaders or young people:

<http://www.jai-pal.org/en/>

Quaker Voluntary Action – organises working retreats based at the Quaker Centre in Ramallah: <http://www.qva.org.uk/>

These last three organisations do similar work to EAPPI, making it possible to accompany people for longer periods, though their recruitment/modus operandi are different.

International Women's Peace Service - <http://iwps.info/> . Also offers short term delegations.



Israeli Border Police and Palestinian youth face each other at Qalandia Check Point – Ramadan 2016

Christian Peacemakers Team - <http://www.cpt.org/>. Also offers short term delegations - <http://cpt.org/participate/delegation>.

Operation Dove - www.operationdove.org/

Other ways to travel/take action - <http://www.kairosbritain.org.uk/category/taking-action/trips-to-palestineisrael/>

You can also visit the Medical Aid for Palestinians website for some more suggestions - http://www.map-uk.org/get_involved/work_in_the_middle_east Longer term jobs/secondments in the area can be found on - www.reliefweb.int.

Some Reports and Books of Interest

Akenson, Donald Harman (1992) - God's Peoples: Covenant and Land in South Africa, Israel and Ulster. Cornell University Press

Anglican Peace and Justice Network (2004) A report of its deliberations in Jerusalem http://apjn.anglicancommunion.org/media/53185/apjn_jersusalem.pdf

Ateek, Naim Stifan (2017) – A Palestinian Theology of Liberation: The Bible, Justice and the Palestine-Israel Conflict. Orbis Books

Brown, Brian J (2015) – Born to be Free – The indivisibility of freedom: A Methodist Minister's quest for Justice and Freedom on two Continents. Church in the Market Place.

Bruggermann, Walter (2015) – Chosen?: Reading the Bible Amid the Israel-Palestinian Conflict. Westminster John Knox Press

Brunton, Martin (2013) – The Palestinian – Israeli Conflict: A very short Introduction. Oxford University Press

Goldstone, Katrina (2000) 'Benevolent Helpfulness'? Ireland and the International Reaction to Jewish Refugees, 1933-9 in 'Irish Foreign Policy 1919-1966' Skelly Four Courts Press

Irish Commission for Justice and Social Affairs (ICJSA)

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2007/01/01/palestine-israel-principles-for-a-just-peace/>

Lovatt, Hugh (2017) **European Council on Foreign Relations – How Ireland and the EU can promote peace in Israel - Palestine**

http://www.sadaka.ie/What_We_Do/Political_Lobbying/Conference2017/Forum/How_Ireland_&_EU_can_promote_peace_in_Israel_&_Palestine.pdf

John Stott – The place of Israel -- A sermon by a prominent British evangelical writer on the meaning of 'Israel' <http://emeu.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/John-Stott-The-Place-of-Israel.pdf>



Eucharist being celebrated on the route of the Separation Barrier cutting Palestinian landowners off from their land. Photo EAPPI

Kairos Ireland is part of an international movement responding to a call for solidarity with Palestinians and action to end the occupation of Palestine by Israel. This call, made by Church leaders in Jerusalem, describes the occupation as *'a sin against God and humanity because it deprives the Palestinians of their basic human rights, bestowed by God. It distorts the image of God in the Israeli who has become an occupier just as it distorts this image in the Palestinian living under occupation.'*

In Kairos Ireland we are an ecumenical group who have seen the occupation for ourselves and long for the day when justice and peace will embrace, and all the people of Palestine and Israel will enjoy equality, dignity and respect regardless of religion or ethnicity. We call on Christians and all people of good will in Ireland to join us in this quest.

Website: **kairosireland.org**

email: **kairosireland@gmail.com**

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