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# **THE PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM UNITE IN A CALL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE AMIDST UNFOLDING VIOLENCE**





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JERUSALEM, October 7, 2023

The Holy Land, a place sacred to countless millions around the world, is currently mired in violence and suffering due to the prolonged political conflict and the lamentable absence of justice and respect for human rights. We, the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, have time and again appealed for the importance of respecting the historic and legal Status Quo of the holy shrines. In these trying times, we come together to raise our voices in unity, echoing the divine message of peace and love for all humanity.

As custodians of the Christian faith, deeply rooted in the Holy Land, we stand in solidarity with the people of this region, who are enduring the devastating consequences of continued strife. Our faith, which is founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ, compels us to advocate for the cessation of all violent and military activities that bring harm to both Palestinian and Israeli civilians.

We unequivocally condemn any acts that target civilians, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, or faith. Such actions go against the fundamental principles of humanity and the teachings of Christ, who implored us to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31).

It is our fervent hope and prayer that all parties involved will heed this call for an immediate cessation of violence. We implore political leaders and authorities to engage in sincere dialogue, seeking lasting solutions that promote justice, peace, and reconciliation for the people of this land, who have endured the burdens of conflict for far too long.

In our capacity as spiritual leaders, we extend our hands to all those who suffer, and we pray that the Almighty may grant comfort to the afflicted, strength to the weary, and wisdom to those in positions of authority. We call upon the international community to redouble its efforts to mediate a just and lasting peace in the Holy Land, based on equal rights for all and on international legitimacy.

Let us remember the words of the Apostle Paul: "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace" (1 Corinthians 14:33). In the spirit of this divine message, we implore all to work tirelessly towards an end to violence and the establishment of a just and lasting peace that will allow the Holy Land to be a beacon of hope, faith, and love for all.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all during these challenging times.

—The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem

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