

PRESSURE FOR PEACE: A CALL FOR SANCTIONS

"So now, you kings, come to your senses, You earthly rulers, learn your lesson".

Psalms 2:10

"What is going on these days in Gaza is not war. It is a massacre of civilians, men, women and children. [...] What is going on in Gaza is blind evil striking out through a wrong vision of security, self-defense and peace.

We implore God Almighty who told us: "Ask and it will be given to you, search and you will find, knock and the door will be open to you." (Mt.7;7) O Lord we have asked, and we have knocked, and we have been seeking justice and peace for years. But no doors have been opened and we have been treated very unjustly. Lord, open the hearts and minds of all, those who are afraid and insecure, those who kill, and the people of Gaza who, despite a 7 year-old siege and three consecutive assaults believed that they were secure in their rebuilt homes, but their homes are demolished and their lives taken.

It is time for a radical change of concepts and positions. Israelis and Palestinians can live together in peace and mutual love if the root causes of injustice are removed. Education given to the people was negative in past years. A new education must start: love is possible, coexistence is possible. The concept of fear and insecurity should change. The concept of killing so easily hundreds of men, women and children must change. Lords of war, you are on the wrong path. All the killings, all your violence, all your weapons will not bring you security and will not take away your fear.

The ways of peace are ways of peace. Only these can lead to security and peace. Israel and all Israel's friends must understand that after sixty years of killing and violence, the salvation and the survival of Israel will never be achieved by the present violence.. Israel's friends must help Israel understand, if their love for Israel is sincere and if they truly care for the human being, whether Israeli or Palestinian, things must change. [...] Seeking peace can only be achieved through peaceful means.

We call upon all who care for human dignity, and human life to act now without any further delay. We call upon the international community, governments, churches and civil society to exert pressure on Israel to abide by international law and to lift the siege on Gaza and put an end to its military occupation of the Palestinian Territories in accordance with UN resolutions. And to overcome and remove all the obstacles that have hindered the long awaited peace. It takes wisdom and compassion over and above being fair to both parties of this conflict – especially when one is an occupier and the other is occupied. There needs to be an exerted effort and resolve to bring about peace for all: Israelis and Palestinians whereby everybody feels secure and enjoying freedom and equal rights in a democratic sovereign state. No more repetition of invasions and massacres and senseless killing, whether individual or collective as it is happening now in Gaza.

We call on the Churches to assume their responsibilities towards the Holy Land, the land of their roots, if they truly care for their roots, and for the Holy Land and its people. Many churches seem to be indifferent or intimidated to take action. Churches need to put pressure on Israel and also on their governments to end Israeli impunity and hold her accountable. Such Diplomatic pressure is needed now more than ever. It is a question of saving lives but also imposing accountability for criminal acts. As in similar

International situations, now is the time for Economic and Military Sanctions .

Almighty God, heavenly Father, hear our prayers. Help us work together towards freedom, justice and peace Fill our heart with love and compassion and help us achieve just peace without which no security can be guaranteed for anybody. Remind us that we are all created in your image, and that we can all triumph over every evil and live in your peace, and not only by human treaties and agreements."

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