



July 17, 2025

### Your Beatitudes and Eminences,

The Higher Presidential Committee for Church Affairs in Palestine extends its warmest regards to Your Beatitudes, Eminences, and the Heads of Churches around the world. We write to you with a profound sense of urgency, as we bear witness to a dangerous and accelerating reality, one that poses an existential threat to the Christian presence in the Holy Land, violates the sanctity of places of worship, and strikes at the heart of Christian and human values alike.

This morning, the Holy Family Latin Church in Gaza was subjected to a direct Israeli airstrike. The attack, so far, claimed the lives of two members of the community, Saed Salameh and Fumiya Ayyad, and left several others critically wounded, including the parish priest, Father Gabriel Romanelli. The church itself suffered extensive and deliberate damage. This heinous act occurred amidst an ongoing siege and military assault on Gaza, where sacred sites have become targets of war, and the desecration of both Christian and Muslim holy sites has become a routine and unchecked policy of destruction.

Simultaneously, settler violence continues to escalate in the historic Christian town of Taybeh, east of Ramallah. In recent days, settlers have stormed St. George Church and the Christian cemetery, terrifying residents and desecrating sacred ground. These acts of terror are being carried out in the open, under the cover of institutional paralysis and an international silence that can no longer be morally or legally justified.

What is unfolding on the ground is not random. It is a deliberate campaign, a systematic targeting of churches, clergy, and entire Christian communities in Palestine. The message it carries is unmistakable: "There is no place for you here."

We reject this message with absolute clarity. We reject it with our voices, our truth, our faith, and our rootedness in this land.

In light of these grave and escalating violations, we call upon you, our partners in faith and in the universal pursuit of justice, to rise to this moment. We call for:

- A united, unambiguous moral stand from churches across the world, holding the occupying power fully responsible for these crimes and confronting this aggressive, systematic policy head-on.
- A renewed assumption of ethical and spiritual responsibility in the face of gross violations of international law and the principles of dignity and justice.







- Immediate action and pressure on governments and international actors to halt these atrocities, enforce international law, and end the culture of impunity that enables such crimes to continue.

The Church must not stand by as a passive witness to injustice. It is called to be a bearer of conscience, a defender of truth, and a protector of the vulnerable. Silence, in this hour, amounts to complicity.

Let it be said clearly: prayers alone, whispered behind closed doors, will not suffice. What is required now is courage - an unwavering public stance in the face of injustice.

The Palestinian people - Christians and Muslims together - are enduring an unrelenting aggression. We cannot afford delay. We are confident that the global Church, whose mission has always been to walk alongside the oppressed, will recognize this moment as a test of its witness, and an opportunity to turn faith into bold and visible action.

With deepest respect,

**Dr. Ramzi Khouri**  
**Member of the PLO Executive Committee**  
**Head of the Higher Presidential Committee for Church Affairs in Palestine**

