



PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF THE CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

MOURNING CIVILIAN VICTIMS OF THE MASSACRE IN GAZA AND EXTENDING SOLIDARITY TO THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

October 17, 2023—Jerusalem, The Holy Land

We, the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, join together in profound solidarity with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem as we bear witness to the criminal attack that unfolded within the precincts of the Al Ahli Anglican Episcopal Hospital in Gaza. This heart-wrenching crime occurred on a day when the Christian community had convened in earnest prayer, beseeching the heavens for peace, reconciliation, and the cessation of the war on Gaza.

Drawing inspiration from the enduring human spirit in the face of overwhelming adversity, we recall the verse from Psalm 34:18, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." This spirit is embodied in the face of the horrifying shattering of a sanctuary of compassion and healing in Gaza, culminating in the tragic loss of hundreds of innocent lives.

In unyielding unity, we vehemently denounce this crime with our strongest condemnation. The initial reports of the Church hospital in Gaza tragedy have left us steeped in sorrow, for it represents a profound transgression against the very principles held by humanity. Hospitals, designated as sacred havens under international law, have been desecrated by Military Forces.

We unequivocally declare this atrocity as an egregious crime, one demanding the severest censure and international accountability. We implore the global community to embrace its sacred duty to shield civilians and to ensure that such heinous transgressions are never again permitted.

With heavy hearts, we acknowledge the profound loss of life at Al Ahli Anglican Episcopal Hospital. We hereby declare full solidarity with our brothers and sisters who have borne the unfathomable weight of this assault. As one united voice, we implore our friends, partners, and all people of goodwill to stand with us as we grieve the tragic results.

Our prayers and support remain steadfast, and our collective voices rise as an impassioned chorus, calling for justice, peace, and the cessation of the suffering that has descended upon the people of Gaza.

—The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem