



World Council of Churches

General Secretariat

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Geneva, October 26, 2017

H.E. Federica Mogherini
High Representative of the European
Union for Foreign Affairs and
Security Policy / Vice-President of
the Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Your Excellency,

The World Council of Churches has a long history of advocacy and action for peace with justice in Israel and Palestine, including strong support for the two-state solution as the best available arrangement for resolving the longstanding conflict, addressing the persistent injustice of occupation, and promoting a sustainable peace for both Palestinians and Israelis. We deeply regret the recent trajectory of developments in the region that renders this objective more and more distant, and undermines the hopes and legitimate aspirations of people who have been living under occupation for 50 years.

It is therefore with great concern that we observe the proposed "Greater Jerusalem" legislative initiative whereby the Knesset may render the two-state solution impossible. As Christians we are called by our faith to speak out when human dignity and rights are being violated, and as churches around the world we are committed to support international humanitarian and human rights law as a moral as well as a legal framework to be respected and implemented by all states. We are concerned that the proposed "Greater Jerusalem" legislation may threaten the human rights of the Palestinian population of East Jerusalem and the Bedouins in area C, as well as the prospects for realization of the two-state solution based on the 1967 lines.

We firmly believe that a viable two-state solution is in the interests of both Israelis and Palestinians. It is the way to a just peace. The proposed legislation takes the opposite course, and threatens to further worsen the living conditions of both Palestinians and Bedouins in the affected areas, and to create a situation in which Palestinian East Jerusalemites are left geographically isolated, politically disempowered and economically moribund.

It is of utmost importance that the EU, as a major voice for upholding international law, vigorously protests the proposed legislation. The relevant initiatives will be voted on already this Sunday, 29 October, and so the necessary action must be taken promptly.

On behalf of the WCC's member churches and partners around the world, I appeal to you to speak out urgently and clearly against this regressive and destructive initiative, that would do so much to undermine the EU's own engagement for a just and sustainable peace in the region.

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olav Fykse Tveit'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary