



World Council of Churches

General Secretariat

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Geneva, 8 July 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr President,

Christian greetings on behalf of the World Council of Churches' ecumenical fellowship of churches in more than 120 countries around the world – including in the United States of America – representing some 580 million Christians globally. As you prepare for your forthcoming visit to Israel and the West Bank, I write to appeal for your attention to the plight of the churches and Christians of the Holy Land.

Your visit take place in a time of ongoing and escalating dispossession and displacement of Palestinian families and communities from their homes in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the West Bank, and of expanding settlements and settlement enclaves that threaten the multi-religious and multicultural identity of Jerusalem and undermine any remaining prospect of a viable two-state solution to secure peace with justice for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

Against this background, the Churches and Christian communities of Jerusalem have also faced increasing threats to their future existence in the land of Christ's birth and in the very place of his death and resurrection. The past seven months have seen no fewer than seven statements by the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem warning of these threats against the ancient Christian presence in the Holy Land, and to the living identity of the Christian Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem. In addition to the expropriation of properties, recent years have seen a marked rise in discrimination, abuse, vandalism, arson and hate crimes against Christians, clergy and churches. I urge you to listen and respond to the voices of the churches of the Holy Land as you undertake your visit.

The rich religious and social diversity, the historic status quo and heritage of the Holy City of Jerusalem are in imminent danger. I appeal to you and to all people of good will who recognize Jerusalem as sacred to three religions and a city of two peoples, to speak and act to secure this vision and this hope, against those who seek to displace, exclude and marginalize others. I ask you to help end the displacement and marginalization, and to restore hope in a just peace in the region – for Jews, Muslims and Christians, for Israelis and Palestinians, and for all who seek simply to live in peace and equal human dignity and rights.

I pray that you will be inspired with this vision of inclusive peace as you undertake your visit, and that you will be granted wisdom and fortitude to seek this peace and to pursue it.

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ioan Saucă". The signature is written in a cursive style with a distinct vertical line for the letter 'I'.

Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Saucă