

Appeal from the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem 24 March 2001

We the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem:
concerned for the spiritual, mental and bodily well-being of all the citizens of this Holy Land, Christian, Moslem and Jew, appeal to the Israeli Government; the Palestinian Authority; World Leaders (Secular and Religious); as well as to all men and women of goodwill to help bring an urgent conclusion to the conflict affecting the lives of thousands in this land.

We are convinced that peace-seeking negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians are the only assured way of providing for the well being of all our peoples.

We believe that the violence which has intensified over these past months will only end when both parties in the conflict make a determined effort to respect each other's rights whilst affirming the dignity and worth of every human life (man, woman and child).

We would respectfully request protection for all our people in order to assist the reestablishment of mutual trust and security for Israelis and Palestinians. Further we would call on all peace-loving people from around the world to come and join us in a manifestation of just peace.

Furthermore, we would ask for even greater assistance from our brothers and sisters abroad -- Governments, Aid Agencies as well as Churches and private individuals -- for those in need in the areas of conflict. Despite all the kind help to date (for which we express sincere gratitude) many are desperate for food, clothing, shelter and the like. In this appeal for help we would call to mind the words of Jesus when He said "In as much as you do this for the least of these my little ones, you do it for me." (Matt 25:40).

In a few weeks all the Christians of the world will celebrate together the commemoration of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus died to offer the world God's forgiveness and encourage reconciliation. He rose again to offer the world fullness of life. We firmly believe that now is the time to establish forgiveness and reconciliation on all sides in order to work for fullness of life for every citizen of this Land.

- + Patriarch Irenios I: Greek Orthodox Patriarchate
- + Patriarch Michel Sabbah: Latin Patriarchate
- + Patriarch Torkom II: Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Patriarchate
- + Father Giovanni Battistelli: Custody of the Holy Land
- + Anba Abraham: Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate
- + Swerios Malki Mourad: Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate
- + Abba Cuostos: Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarchate
- + Riah Abu Al-Assal: Episcopal Church of Jerusalem & the Middle East
- + Mounib Younan: Evangelical Lutheran Church
- + Archimandrite Nabil Safieh: Greek Catholic (Melkite) Patriarchal Exarchate