

**World Council of Churches
Geneva**

Nijkerk, Netherlands, 4 June 2020

Dear sisters and brothers,

We have noted with great dismay the letter that you sent as World Council of Churches to the EU Foreign Ministers on May 8th. In this letter you call on the EU to condemn Israel for its proposed application of Israeli law to the Jordan Valley and settlement blocs, and to suspend the Association Agreement with Israel. This has shocked us deeply. To the best of our knowledge, the World Council of Churches has never in its history called for a government to impose economic sanctions on a country. Is this selective indignation?

For more than ten years, the Palestinian Authority has refused to sit down with Israel in order to reach an agreement to come to a peaceful solution. For years the Palestinian Authority has been investing in hate education through schoolbooks. For years the Palestinian Authority has been paying terrorists who attack Jews. Thousands of rockets have been fired from Gaza ever since Israel handed it over to the Palestinians in 2005. As you all know, Israel is the only safe place for Christians in the Middle East. The place where Christians can freely confess their faith. In numerous countries in the Middle East Christians have been massacred or had to flee because of the many religiously motivated wars. With the startling result that there is almost no more room for Christians in the Middle East. However, now that Israel takes a step, the World Council of Churches takes action and calls for the suspension of the EU trade relations with Israel. We find this shocking, shameful and unworthy of the Christian Church. We are concerned that there is a theology underlying this, in which the enduring place of the Biblical nation of Israel in salvation history is ignored and denied.

Churches should not be at the forefront of dictating what Israel should and should not do, after ages of anti-Semitism and demonizing the Jewish people. It would honor the churches, if they showed a little more awareness of the extremely difficult circumstances in which Israel and the Jewish people find themselves, in an area in which the destruction of Israel is widely preached.

Opinions on this proposed application of Israeli law differ both among Jews in Israel and Palestinians in this area. There are also Palestinians and Palestinian Christians who expect they will receive more freedom, justice and democratic rights under Israeli government than under the Palestinian Authority or in a future Palestinian State. Also among the members of the Churches that are associated with the World Council of Churches, opinions on this proposed application are very divided.

We call upon you, as well as the churches on whose behalf you have apparently spoken, to retract publicly your letter to the EU Council of Foreign Ministers.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the International board and management of Christians for Israel International, an inter-denominational movement in 42 countries worldwide, that provides Biblical education regarding Israel and the Jewish people.

Dr. Leon Meijer
Chairman

Rev. Cornelis Kant
Executive Director

Rev. Willem J.J. Glashouwer
President