



With heartfelt thanks to God for the recovery of His Holiness Pope Francis, we, Kairos Palestine; Palestinian Christian clergy and community leaders of all Churches in Jerusalem, address you with deep sorrow and urgency regarding the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) joint resource with the American Jewish Committee's "Translate Hate document." This decision comes at a time of immense suffering for our people, as tens of thousands are being killed, starved, and displaced under Israel's genocidal war on Gaza and the West Bank including East Jerusalem — actions condemned by leading international and Israeli human rights organizations. It has also been adopted without any form of consultation with Palestinian Christians, rendering us invisible and nonexistent in a discourse that directly impacts our lives and communities. **The document's failure to address hate speech propagated on the Israeli side renders it fundamentally biased, effectively turning it into a form of hate speech against Palestinians.**

As followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called to speak truth to power and stand for justice. Jesus Himself declared, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). **This document misrepresents our struggle and seeks**

It is essential to affirm that our criticisms of Israel's policies and the actions of its leaders are not directed at Jewish communities or Judaism itself. **Israel and its policies must not be conflated with Jewish identity, and our call for accountability is not an expression of antisemitism.** Rather, it is a moral and just demand for peace, security, and dignity — for Palestinians and for Jewish communities alike. True justice does not come at the expense of one people over another but ensures the safety and rights of all. In this context, adopting the Jerusalem Declaration or the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism is highly problematic, as the IHRA's definition dangerously equates Zionism with Judaism — despite the fact that thousands of Jews around the world reject Zionism as a political ideology.

The document claims that accusations of settler colonialism and ethnic cleansing in Palestine are "categorically false," disregarding overwhelming evidence from organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, B'Tselem and many Israeli historians, even many early Zionist figures such as Ze'ev Jabotinsky. It equates Palestinian resistance with antisemitism, a dangerous conflation that distorts reality and undermines legitimate criticism of Israeli racist laws and policies. **We categorically reject all forms of antisemitism, just as we reject any attempt to use this charge to justify oppression and to criminalize our legitimate struggle for our basic rights and our right for self-determination.**

Furthermore, the document's selective portrayal of history omits the staggering Palestinian casualties in Israel's wars against our people in their quest for freedom. **Most egregiously, it ignores the current devastation in Gaza, where entire families — our families — have perished, and where churches sheltering the innocent have not been spared Israeli bombardment.** Even Pope Francis has condemned this cruelty, lamenting, "So much cruelty. Children machine-gunned, schools and hospitals bombed."

By partnering in this document, the USCCB has alienated the indigenous Christians of the Holy Land, causing deep pain to a community struggling for survival. Ignoring their unalienable rights to live in their ancestral homeland and offering the State of Israel a justification for their forced displacement by considering their human and national rights as blood libels, only deepens this harm. We urge you to reconsider your stance and retract this endorsement. **We need the Church's voice to stand with justice and truth, not with narratives that conceal suffering and excuse oppression. to silence voices advocating for truth and justice in the Holy Land.** It negates also the immense injustices inflicted upon Palestinians, including the indigenous Christian community whose presence in the Holy Land is on the verge of extinction.