

March 19, 2014

Secretary John Kerry
The State Department
2201 C Street NW
Washington DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

As Christian leaders, we commend you for your active efforts to reach a comprehensive agreement to end the long-standing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians with the mutual recognition, dignity, justice, and security that each side deserves.

Given the difficulties involved, a framework for conclusive negotiations seems an essential step if there is to be progress towards a final status agreement. Without progress now, we fear an important opportunity for peace will be lost.

Lack of a resolution will have negative consequences for both Israelis and Palestinians and exacerbate other grave problems in the region. Failure would have detrimental consequences for the entire international community, including the United States, as well as exacerbate ongoing humanitarian concerns. We hope that the framework will be based on principles of international law.

The preservation and welfare of the Christian communities affected by this conflict are important to us.

A comprehensive agreement should greatly strengthen opportunities for them to flourish. Moreover, the support and inclusion of all three Abrahamic faiths is critical as they will have an important role to play in promoting the peace process.

Recalling the blessedness of peacemakers, we pray for your success and pledge to help you in every way we can in building a secure and just peace.

Most sincerely,

His Beatitude Fouad Twal
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa ofm
Custos of the Holy Land
Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land

His Grace Dr. Anba Abraham
Archbishop
Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem & the Near East

His Grace Dr. Munib A. Younan
Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

His Grace Suheil Dawani
Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem
Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East

Archbishop Vicken Aykazian
Armenian Orthodox Church of North America

Rev. Donald H. Ashmall
Council Minister
International Council of Community Churches

Rev. Geoffrey Black
General Minister and President
United Church of Christ

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Executive Director
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Tony Campolo
Professor of Sociology at Eastern University
Red Letter Christians

Archbishop of Oklahoma City Paul S. Coakley
Chairman of the Board
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General Secretary
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Paula Dempsey
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Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim
Archbishop
Archdiocese of the Syrian Orthodox Church for the Eastern USA

Mark Labberton, PhD
President
Fuller Theological Seminary

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Bishop Rosemarie Wenner
President, Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

James Winkler
President and General Secretary
National Council of Churches