



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

January 28, 2020

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Psalm 122:6)

I am very dismayed and disturbed by President Trump's announcement of a “peace plan” that, I fear, will bring greater insecurity for Israelis and Palestinians instead of peace.

Our church has long held that any successful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be based on negotiation between the parties. Unfortunately, this “plan” has involved only one party. A plan made for a people without consulting that people will not bring peace. It also seeks to remove from the table many of the final status issues by effectively giving a green light to Israel to further entrench the occupation, rather than end it, - a [policy](#) we have advocated for years.

Rather than drawing together Israelis and Palestinians to reach a peace accord, the effect of this plan will be further alienation and, I am afraid, more tension, with the possibility of new, violent responses. This path will not lead to peace with justice. It will not promote reconciliation. But it will reinforce extremists in Israel, in Palestine and throughout the region, decreasing security for everyone.

Just last week, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo briefed the Security Council, noting:

“It is sadly not a surprise that a recent survey of millennials by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) found that almost two-thirds (65 per cent) of Israeli millennials thought the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would ‘never end’, making them the least optimistic of the people surveyed in countries affected by war. Palestinians were also pessimistic, although slightly less so, with 52 per cent believing that the conflict would never end.

“The international community bears a responsibility to help build a different future for these young Israelis and Palestinians, one that promises hope, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence rather than perpetual occupation and conflict.”

She closed by saying she “would like to emphasize the continued urgency of resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of relevant UN resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements.””

Therefore, I call upon President Trump to develop a different plan that would involve all parties, and to pursue efforts that would adhere to international law and human rights conventions. This plan should ensure the protection and preservation of internationally recognized human rights and realize, for Palestinians and for Israelis, two viable, secure states living side by side in peace.

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