

Christians for Fair Witness on the Middle East Calls For a Settlement Freeze Following the Latest Instance of Israeli Settler Terrorism

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NEW YORK – Suspected Israeli settlers set a Palestinian home on fire in Duma, a village near Nablus in the West Bank, on Friday July 31st, killing Ali Saad Dawabsha — an 18-month-old baby — and seriously injuring his parents and brother. The arsonists threw fire bombs inside the home before dawn while the family was still sleeping. The word “revenge” in Hebrew was found scrawled outside below a Star of David.

Christians for Fair Witness on the Middle East (“Fair Witness”) is appalled by this latest instance of Israeli settler terrorism. The Israeli settlement movement has created a situation where religious zealots run amok in the West Bank, often harassing Palestinians. And although Israeli PM Netanyahu condemned the attack and called it an act of terrorism, his words ring hollow in light of his aggressive support for the settlement movement.

Fair Witness recognizes and appreciates serious efforts and offers past Israeli governments (Ehud Barak in 2000 and Ehud Olmert in 2008) made to end the occupation and give up settlements. It is tragic that the Palestinian Authority walked away from those offers because the occupation could have been over and each people could have been living in their own homeland in peace and security.

But the current Israeli government has done nothing to end the status quo, nor has the Palestinian Authority.

Fair Witness calls for a freeze on any and all settlement growth until leaders on both sides come to their senses and find a permanent political solution. We call for both PM Netanyahu and President Abbas to stop their endless transparent posturing and sit down together and sign a final status agreement. Until that happens, it appears that both of their people will continue to be victims and perpetrators of senseless acts of violence.