

Christians for Fair Witness on the Middle East Issues a Plea for the Peace of Jerusalem

October 27, 2014

(New York, NY, October 27, 2014) Christians for Fair Witness on the Middle East ("Fair Witness") is deeply concerned about the recent outbreaks of violence in Jerusalem. East Jerusalem Palestinians have been attacking Jews, Jewish homes, the light rail system and even kindergartens with rocks, slabs of concrete and molotov cocktails. Last week an infant was killed when an East Jerusalem resident rammed his car into a crowd of Israeli commuters. The death toll in that attack rose to two this past Sunday when a twenty two year old woman died after being critically wounded in that same attack.

"At the same time, recent behavior by the Israelis has been highly provocative," says Msgr. Dennis L. Mikulanis, STD, pastor of San Rafael Parish in San Diego, California, and Fair Witness Executive Committee member. "Actions such as the Israeli border police escorting Jewish families as they move into the primarily Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan in the dark of night, or right wing MK Moshe Feiglin touring the Temple Mount surrounded by Israeli security forces with their rifles drawn, seem almost destined to ignite an already incendiary situation."

"We continue to believe that the fundamental problem is a complete absence of any real leadership on either side," says Fr. James Loughran, S.A., Director of the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute and Fair Witness Executive Committee member. "Instead of working hard to reach the compromises necessary for a lasting agreement and true peace, both Israeli and Palestinian leaders engage in inciteful rhetoric at the same time that they avoid serious negotiations. Why both PM Netanyahu and President Abbas would seem to be content with a status quo which is only harming both peoples is not clear. But it may be time for the international community to demand that both parties stop making excuses and blaming one another and return in good faith to the negotiating table."

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