

State of Palestine
Palestine Liberation Organization
Negotiations Affairs Department

Israeli Incitement And Discrimination Against Palestinian Christians

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01. Introduction

It is often assumed that Israel's occupation of Palestine is a religious conflict between Muslims and Jews rather than a settler-colonial project intended to oppress and displace the indigenous Palestinian population. There are two critical and damaging consequences to this misinformed narrative: The first ignores the significant and vibrant Christian community that resides in Palestine and actively contributes to its social fabric, and the second oversimplifies the diversity of Palestinian society while purposefully manufacturing a false division between Muslims and Christians in a way that undermines their Palestinian national identity.

Therefore, it is imperative to acknowledge that Palestinian Christians and Muslims alike confront similar forms of discrimination at the hands of the Israeli occupation. By imposing oppressive measures, the occupation does not discriminate based on religious affiliation; instead, it targets individuals solely based on their Palestinian and non-Jewish identity. Incitement against Christians, therefore, is part of the provocations against all the Palestinian people. With Israeli violence and incitement on the rise, all Palestinians are becoming increasingly targeted with policies that perpetuate the negation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

The international community usually overlooks incitement and acts of violence against Palestinians by Israeli ultra-nationalists. In occupied Jerusalem, for example, this culture of impunity fosters an environment conducive to discrimination, thereby posing a grave threat to the survival of Christianity in Palestine, the birthplace of Jesus. Such incitement is institutionalised by the State of Israel through racist legislation, most notably the Jewish Nation-State Law that reserves the right to self-determination exclusively for the Jewish citizens of Israel. These laws are blatantly discriminatory and contradict 21st-century principles of justice and equality.

“Since 2012, there have been countless incidents of physical and verbal assaults against priests and other clergy, attacks on Christian churches, with holy sites regularly vandalised and desecrated, and ongoing intimidation of local Christians who simply seek to worship freely and go about their daily lives. Such radical groups are using these tactics in a systematic attempt to drive the Christian community out of Jerusalem and other parts of the Holy Land.” - [Statement](#) by The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem.

02. KEY FACTS

Since the mid-1940s, the number of Christians in the Holy Land has decreased due to Israel's systemic policies to oust the indigenous Palestinian Christian population. Between 1922 and 1946, the Christian population fell from [11% to 8%](#) of the population of historic Palestine.

According to the [British Mandate Census](#), in 1922, there were 14,699 Christians and 13,413 Muslims in Jerusalem. By 1945, the numbers increased to [29,350](#) and [30,630](#), respectively. However, in the wake of the [1947 UN Partition Plan for Palestine](#), the Christian population dramatically decreased, whereby nearly 50% of Christians lost their homes. Today, Palestinian Christians comprise almost [1.2%](#) of the population in the land of historic Palestine and [1%](#) of the occupied State of Palestine.

Many Palestinian Christians live abroad because of the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 occupation of the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. They are mainly concentrated in Jordan, Lebanon, Australia, Canada, Chile, the USA, and the UAE. Palestinian Christians in the diaspora/exile who wish to visit Palestine require Israeli permits and visas, which are challenging to obtain and, more commonly, denied.

Prominent Locations of Palestinian Christians in the Diaspora / Exile



About 10,000 Palestinian Christians reside in occupied Jerusalem, all of which face a direct threat from Israel's effort to strengthen its illegal annexation of the city. The presence of Palestinian Christians in the occupied Palestinian capital is threatened by Israeli policies, laws, and practices, including the revocation of ID cards, rejection of family unification, demolition of homes, and the forcible transfer/ displacement of the indigenous Palestinian population in favour of Israel's colonial-settler project.

The "[Absentee Property Law](#)," for example, allows Jews alone to reclaim property they owned or claimed their ownership before 1948. In contrast, Palestinians, including Christians, are prevented from reclaiming their properties confiscated by Israel in West Jerusalem in 1948 and after.

Even though they are relatively few, Christians and Christian organisations remain vocal and active in key leadership positions. Today, nearly [296 church-related organisations \(CROs\)](#) exist in the occupied West Bank (WB), making them the third largest employer after the Palestinian National Authority and UNRWA. CROs play a significant role in Palestinian society by providing education, healthcare, social protection, and cultural preservation.

Israel, the occupying power, encourages targeted violence and threatens Christianity's survival in the Holy Land. Palestinians' daily reality is, therefore, characterised by all forms of incitement against them enhanced by racist laws and policies. For example, by targeting the Christian Quarter, the New Gate, the Jaffa Gate, and the Armenian Quarter, Israeli colonial plans threaten to undermine the pilgrimage route to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre seriously. To further alienate Palestinians, Israel aims to alter the demographic and geographical features of the Holy City.

03. FORMS OF INCITEMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

A. Physical & Verbal Assaults Against Priests and Other Clergy (Examples)

- Two Armenian seminarians were almost deported in 2009 after they defended themselves against Jewish religious students who spat at them.
- A Yeshiva Student [spat at](#) Nourhan Manougian, the current Armenian Patriarch, for wearing a cross around his neck (a protocol followed by Armenian Bishops since the 17th century). The Israeli authorities did not hold the assailant accountable for what he did. Instead, they tried to file charges against Manougian for slapping the student in defence.
- At midnight on 17 May 2021, A group of young Jewish extremists, while en route to perform a religious service, physically attacked Reverend Father Arbak Sarukhanyan, a member of the St. Hakobyants Monastic Congregation. He was injured and rushed to the hospital.
- On 15 April 2023, the [Israeli occupation forces attacked](#) Christian worshippers during the Holy Fire ceremony at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Tensions arose due to Israel's limit on the number of participations to 1,800, which led to confrontations between worshippers and police, including violent arrests and beatings.

B. Israeli Colonial Plans in the Christian Quarter in Occupied Jerusalem's Old City

- In 1990, Israeli settlers, with the support of the Israeli government, acted against the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate by occupying the Saint John Hospice across the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a Patriarchate property, transforming it into the most significant Jewish settlement in the Old City outside the Jewish Quarter.¹

¹ For a more detailed analysis see: Levy, O. and Cohen, E. (1997) 'The Occupation by Jews of St. John's

- In 2005, a Zionist organisation claimed authority over Greek Orthodox Church property, including two buildings in Jaffa Gate and a third with a sizable land plot in the Al A'thamieh neighbourhood in the Old City. As settlers increasingly gained ownership of these historically significant buildings, they effectively separated the Christian and Armenian Quarters. This affects Jerusalem's diverse identity and attempts to alter the city's character and identity.
- In 2021, an Israeli took over the Armenian plot for a [99-year lease](#). While this was accomplished with the approval of the Armenian Patriarchate, it was against the will of the Synod, General Assembly, and the Armenians in the Holy Land.
- In 2022, the Israeli government [attempted to take over the Mount of Olives](#), one of Christianity's most sacred sites, to build a national park. While Tamar Zandberg, the previous Minister of Environmental Protection, halted the plan, Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing nationalist government's re-election risks reviving the project.
- In 2022, after a 20-year legal battle, Israeli settlers confiscated [the Petra and Imperial Hotels](#) in Jaffa Gate from its Palestinian owners. The properties are strategically located at the entrance of the Christian Quarter in the Old City, signalling disruption to Jerusalem's Christian characteristics.
- Since 2022, intensive and ongoing measures have been at the New Gate to change the Old City's cultural face.

C. Ongoing Intimidation of Palestinian Christians

- Israeli movement restrictions have interrupted the historical connection between Jerusalem and Ramallah, as well as between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, where most Palestinian Christians reside and hold Palestinian ID cards.
- Israel's control of Oslo-defined Area C (comprising 61% of the WB) prevents Palestinians from building and developing their lands and villages. Such restrictions severely impact the viability of many Palestinian localities, which are already endangered by Israel's ongoing settlement expansion and annexation wall limiting Palestinians' access to Bethlehem as it surrounds 88% of the city.
- The heavy presence of Israeli occupation forces during religious holidays and

Hospice in the Old City of Jerusalem: An Analysis of an Iconic Event', *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural systems and World Economic Development*, 26(2), pp. 201-238. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40553323>

celebrations such as Palm Sunday and Easter not only disrupts ceremonies but also creates an atmosphere of intimidation, deterring worshippers from participating.

D. Palestinian Christians Citizens of Israel

- Today, there exists 65 laws in Israel that systemically discriminate against Palestinians. These prejudicial legislations impend various aspects of Palestinians' lives, encompassing impediments to family formation, property acquisition, and the restitution of confiscated lands and properties.
- These laws also impact the Palestinian Christians who were internally displaced from their villages, such as Iqrith, Kufr Birim, and Al-Birwa, as they are permanently barred from returning to their destroyed villages.
- 2023 has witnessed increased attacks on Christian Holy sites in Israel. The most prominent attacks included assaults on the Stella Maris Church in Haifa and the Angel Gabriel's Convent near Nazareth.
- The immigration authority abruptly ceased the issuance of visas to Evangelical Christian clergy working in Israel without any discernible justification, thereby posing a threat to the principles of religious freedom.

E. Attacks against Christian Properties & Churches: Price Tag, Hate Crimes, Vandalism, and Others²:

2024

- **July-September:** [Report by Religious Freedom Data Center](#) details incidents of settlers' attacks against Palestinian Christians and their holy sites. According to the report, there were 30 incidents between July and September (15 incidents of spitting, five incidents of verbal abuse, five incidents of throwing stones, three incidents of assaults and two incidents of vandalism". Regarding the breakdown of incident location, 12 attacks took place in the occupied old city of Jerusalem, 24 attacks in Jerusalem, and six attacks were reported outside Jerusalem.

² The list presented below is compiled by the Jerusalem Liaison Office. This list only includes attacks on Church properties and attacks by radical groups classified as "price tags".

- **28 September:** A racist Jew from Netanya named Natnael Sasi humiliated a cross that he snatched from two foreign Christians ([video](#) posted by Wadie Abu Nassar.)
- **28 September:** Extreme settlers throw stones at a Polish monastery in Jerusalem (Wadie Abu Nassar.)
- **29 July:** [Another Israeli bomb attack at Saint Porphyrios](#) Orthodox Church in Gaza City. Reports from inside the church indicate that two bombs or rockets struck the first floor of the monastery, injuring at least four people.
- **April- June:** [Report by Religious Freedom Data Center](#) details incidents of settler attacks against Palestinian Christians and their holy sites between April and June 2024. The report is uploaded in Hebrew, and the English version is available in PDF.
- **7 July:** [Israeli warplanes bomb the Sacred Family School](#) property of the Latin Patriarchate in Gaza, leaving massive destruction and casualties.
- **24 June:** A group of settlers (students) arrived at the park just as a Christian procession of Orthodox Christians returned to the Orthodox seminary in Mount Zion. A settler spat at the procession. The teachers refused to speak with the RFDC volunteer who saw the event. ([Report by Religious Freedom Data Center](#))
- **13 June:** Spitting: ultra-Orthodox youngsters (black caps, wigs and tassels) spat and cursed at an 80-year-old Franciscan nun in the old city of Jerusalem ([Report by Religious Freedom Data Center](#))
- **19 May:** [Extremist settlers blocked a truck that was taking humanitarian aid to Gaza and unloaded](#) the supplies onto the road near the Avatar colonial installation (outpost). Such attacks occurred on several occasions since Israel's aggression on Gaza commenced.
- **13 May:** Israeli settlers attacked [Jordanian trucks carrying essential humanitarian aid destined for the Gaza Strip](#). They unloaded the trucks and destroyed wheat flower bags.
- **24 March (Palm Sunday) 31 March (Easter):** Israeli occupation forces deprive Palestinian Christians of the West Bank from celebrating Easter according to the Western Calendar in Jerusalem by imposing strict military measures at checkpoints surrounding the city of Jerusalem and in the vicinity of the Old City.
- **03 February:** An [Israeli religious young man from the Haredi movement surprised Father Nicodemus Schnabel](#) in the old city of Jerusalem and spat at

him. When Father Nicodemus stressed his right to photograph the attacker, another young Jewish man came and insulted Jesus Christ ([video.](#))

2023

- **16 December:** An Israeli soldier sniper shot dead a Christian mother and her daughter on the grounds of the [Catholic Church \(Holy Family Parish\)](#) in Gaza City.
- **15-16 November:** [Israeli occupation private security guards and Israeli settlers stormed the Armenian Quarter](#) in a move to assert control of the cows' garden. They brought two bulldozers with them.
- **5 November:** A community activist said armed settlers and their dogs raided the Armenian Quarter in an attempt to seize the cows' garden.
- **1 November:** While Christians were praying in the Catholic Church in Gaza City, Israeli occupation bombardment hit part of the church, causing panic among the Christian worshippers.
- **31 October:** Israel bombarded the [Orthodox Cultural Center](#) in the Tel Al Hawa neighbourhood of Gaza.
- **19 October:** Israel bombed the [Greek Orthodox Church](#) (Saint Porphyrius), the third oldest church in the world, killing 18 people, including Christians and Muslims who were among hundreds of displaced Palestinians seeking shelter in the church.
- **17 October:** Israel bombed the [courtyard of Al-Ahli Baptist](#) Hospital, killing hundreds of Palestinians. Local medical sources estimated the death toll in that hit was close to 500.
- **Since 7 October: Aggression against Gaza:** According to [OCHA](#), at least 7 Churches were damaged
- **2 October:** Jewish youngsters and children spat at the Church of Condemnation located at the second station of the Via Dolorosa in the occupied old city of Jerusalem. ([Video](#) capturing the incident depicts orthodox Jewish children and young men spitting at Christians). Itamar Ben Gvir, the far-rightist minister of national security in Israel, commented on the incident in an [interview.](#)” He said: “There is an ancient Jewish tradition, when we (the Jews) pass by a monastery or a priest, we spit. You can agree or disagree, but when we spit at the priest or the church, I don't think this expresses any violation; why do you turn this into a criminal matter?” Moreover, a well-known settler named Elisha Yered wrote on

his X (formerly Twitter) account, “It’s a good time to mention that spitting near priests or churches is an ancient Jewish custom, and there is even a special blessing in Jewish law that should be recited when you see a church...”

- **30 September:** Wadie Abu Nassar, advisor and media spokesperson of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land, reported an [incident](#) at 4:00 am where radical Jews stoned Angel Gabriel’s Convent near Nazareth.
- **29 September:** Israeli extremists [occupied](#) a Greek Orthodox land on Mount Zion. What was a monthly occurrence has become a daily presence. One settler has been sleeping on the premises for the past ten days. The Police forbade the Church to close the property gate, claiming this has become a tourist route!
- **25 September:** Israeli settlers harass Christian tourists in Jerusalem by shouting at them and ordering them to leave the city. A [video captured](#) the settlers saying, “Don’t come here”, “we don’t want you, go”, and “Jerusalem is ours.”
- **August- 12 September:** A [report](#) by Israeli researcher Yisca Harani, on behalf of the Religious Freedom Data Center, revealed that between August 1st and September 12th, 21 harassment cases were reported against Christians and their holy sites.
- **21 August:** Advisor Wadie Abu Nassar reported an [incident](#) where radical Jews stoned Angel Gabriel’s Convent near Nazareth. A [video](#) capturing the incident depicts young Jewish men shouting in Hebrew as stones audibly strike the Convent.
- **19 August:** Israeli firefighter services [prevented](#) Christians from gathering on Mount Tabor for the Feast of the Transfiguration, citing inadequate fire-safety plans and other safety concerns, leaving thousands of tourists unable to celebrate the holiday.
- **15 August:** Armenians in Jerusalem shared on their [Facebook page](#) provocations by Jewish settlers. One wrote: “Somehow, the Jews in the area began to insinuate ownership of our homes, one of our Jewish neighbours told me (and other Armenians) to “start packing. It was very distributing.”
- **Early August:** A young Christian reported an incident that occurred in the Old City of Jerusalem where an Israeli settler attempted to urinate in front of the St. George Monastery. The young man intervened by pushing the settler away. The Israeli police arrived and detained the young Christian for three days³.

³ The information presented was obtained through an interview conducted by the NAD.

- **July:** Advisor Wadie Abu Nassar reported that Hasidic Jews stormed the Stella Maris Monastery in Haifa nine times. On 23 July, 50 Orthodox Jews performed prayer before the Monastery and verbally assaulted the Christian worshippers who tried to defend the Monastery. The latest attack occurred on 26 July, when two cars attempted to storm the Monastery at 3:30 AM. Two guards stopped them (a [video](#) captured the incident in mid-June.)
- **July:** A [report](#) by Israeli researcher Yisca Harani, on behalf of the Religious Freedom Data Center, revealed that in July alone, 20 harassment cases against Christians in Occupied Jerusalem were recorded, including seven instances of spitting on Christians and Christian sites, seven cases of vandalism, two cases of shouting at pilgrims, two cases of denying access to Christians with distinct Christians apparel, one case of denying Christian services, and one case of approaching a Christian Church citing the right to pray as Jews.⁴
- **20 July -** A group of settlers [stormed](#) the Greek Orthodox Church on Mount Zion, asserting their intention to take possession of the church grounds, arguing that it rightfully belongs to the Jewish community. Video evidence captures two settlers within the church compound, seated on blankets amidst books and camping gear, while verbally assaulting church officials.
- **19 July:** A Catholic Priest walking through the “Wailing Wall” plaza was approached by an official from the Western Wall Heritage Authority who instructed him to remove or conceal his cross. The priest declined to adhere to this request.
- **17 July:** While passing by the Armenian Church, a [Jewish settler verbally threatened](#) two Armenian clergymen while recording and spitting on them.
- **22 June:** Wadie Abu Nassar appears in a [video on Facebook](#) revealing that the Stella Maris Monastery has witnessed several provocations by Hasidic Jews from outside of Haifa who claim that it houses the grave of Prophet Elisha. Abu Nassar refutes the claims, asserting that they “are untrue and that this Monastery has been there for 400 years, and nobody made such claims.”
- **19 June:** The Israeli military incursion against Jenin and its refugee camp caused massive damage to the [Catholic Church](#) in Jenin.
- **18 June:** A [settler smashed the stained-glass windows](#) of Jerusalem's “Last Supper” rooms, known as the Cenacle.

⁴ Report made available upon request.

- **15 May:** A settler [attempted to break](#) into the Armenian Patriarchate but was stopped by an Armenian woman.
- **15 April:** Israeli occupation police [hinder Christians' access to Holy Sepulchre Church](#) during Holy Fire Saturday by installing barriers blocking the entrances to the Old City. They also targeted Coptic Orthodox Priests outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
- **13 April:** A [group of settlers verbally abused](#) and spat at Christian Nuns on Via Dolorosa in occupied Jerusalem.
- **21 March:** Two Israeli Knesset members, Moshe Gafni and Yaakov Asher of the United Torah Judaism Party, proposed an [anti-proselytism bill](#) that would ban efforts to speak and preach Christianity.
- **19 March:** Two Israeli [settlers stormed the Church of Gethsemane](#) (Virgin Mary) in occupied Jerusalem to vandalise the Church's content. A Palestinian man who was in the church stopped them.
- **2 February:** Three settlers [stormed the Church of the Condemnation](#), located at the Second Station of the Via Dolorosa, smashed a statute of the condemned Jesus, and attempted to set the Church on fire.
- **28 January:** Two Armenians driving home were [attacked](#) by Israeli settlers. The attackers targeted their vehicle, verbally assaulted and pepper-sprayed one of the Armenians in the eyes. After the assault, another incident took place where a group of 20 Israeli settlers scaled the walls of the Armenian Patriarchate to remove the flags of Armenia and the Patriarchate. The settlers, joined by the Israeli military forces, brutally attacked a group of young mourners, leaving a memorial event at the Armenian Convent with sticks and tear gas (see [video](#) for reference).
- **26 January:** Israeli settlers attacked an [Armenian restaurant](#) at the New Gate in the Christian Quarter of occupied Jerusalem by throwing chairs at the diners.
- **12 January:** Extremists [vandalised](#) the walls of the Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem with anti-Christian graffiti in Hebrew reading: "Revenge", "Death to Christians", "Death to Armenians", and "Death of Arabs and to Gentiles."
- **1 January:** Israeli settlers [broke into](#) the Protestant cemetery on Mount Zion in Jerusalem and desecrated more than 30 gravestones.

2022

- **27 December:** Members of the Elad settler organisation took over a property in [Wadi Hilweh](#) in Silwan, which the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate has rented to a Jerusalem tenant for decades.
- **18 August:** In the early hours of the day, Israeli police [raided](#) the premises of the Episcopal Church in Ramallah, in the WB, destroying the Church's entrance and the door's glass⁵.
- **6 June:** Israeli radicals [trespassed](#) into the Greek Garden on Mount Zion, a property of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, claiming unfounded ownership tied to King David. In anticipation of the Jewish Shavuot Holiday, the Patriarchate took the precaution of securing the gates of its property due to past incidents involving radicals who trespassed, encamped on the grounds, and vandalised the site.⁶
- **11 May:** The Israeli forces [shot dead](#) Shireen Abu Akleh, a prominent Palestinian Christian journalist, at the entrance of Jenin refugee camp. During Abu Akleh's [funeral procession](#) on 13 May, Israeli police stormed St. Joseph's Hospital in Jerusalem, brutally attacking the pallbearers, who stumbled and almost dropped the coffin.
- **15 April:** The Israeli police [brutally attacked and restricted the access](#) of worshippers during Holy Fire Saturday in Jerusalem. Moreover, many Christians in Gaza and the West Bank were denied entry into Jerusalem to partake in the Holy Ceremony.
- **16 January:** A group of Israeli extremists [vandalised the Dormition Abbey](#), which holds significant religious value, by throwing a bag of construction rubble over the Monastery's walls, damaging the roof and some furniture.

⁵ The raid primarily targeted the premises of Palestinian NGOs, notably housing human rights organisations like Al-Haq, within the Church's complex. A spokesperson for the U.S. State Department [conveyed](#) apprehension regarding this raid. It's noteworthy that in October 2022, the Israeli authorities designated Al-Haq as a terrorist organisation, a decision met with disapproval by the Office of the United Nations Higher Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR).

⁶ On 6 June 2022, The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate issued a statement addressing the breach by radicals and its implications for the sanctity of Mount Zion. It is pertinent to emphasise that this incident is part of a reoccurring pattern, with the Greek Orthodox Chapel, commonly used for Pentecost, being a frequent target of vandalism. Such acts include the pouring of paint inside the Chapel, desecration of the catacombs through urination, deliberate damage to the landscape, littering, and defacement of the basketball court, while religious services face vehement protests. To mitigate these recurrent assaults, the Church has employed a private security guard who is consistently subject to threats.

2021

- **28 October:** The Israeli police [cancelled a cultural event](#) scheduled at Abraham's House in occupied Jerusalem.
- **26 August:** Unknown perpetrators forcibly [removed](#) the Iron Cross embedded in a rock near the Monastery of Tabgha.
- **2 February:** An Israeli settler [vandalised](#) the façade of the Romanian Orthodox Church in West Jerusalem by damaging the church's gate locks and a nearby surveillance camera.

2020⁷

- **4 December:** An Israeli man attempted to [set fire](#) to the Gethsemane Church. Fortunately, a Palestinian resident intervened and prevented further damages by apprehending the perpetrator, who was handed over to the police.

2019

- **21 November:** A group of settlers [infiltrated](#) the village of Taybeh in the WB, where they set fire to a Palestinian vehicle and defaced the external wall of a local house with graffiti.
- **11 June:** The Supreme Court [affirmed](#) the sale of three properties owned by the Greek Patriarchate in the Old City. Despite the Patriarchate's presentation of evidence pointing to [corruption](#) in the 2004 secretive sale, the court disregarded the evidence and upheld the sale.

2018

- **18 October:** Israeli settlers [desecrated and demolished](#) 30 headstones in the graveyard at Beit J'mal's Monastery, a Christian cemetery located in West Jerusalem.

⁷ Limited records available for 2020 due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 lockdowns.

2017

- **19 April:** Settlers [vandalised](#) the walls of a Russian Orthodox Church on Mount Carmel in Haifa.

2016

- **25 October:** Settlers [looted](#) the Church of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor in the Galilee. They damaged icons and stole several trophies and a donation box.
- **17 January:** Jewish extremists [vandalised](#) the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem.
- **9 January:** Settlers [assaulted](#) the cemetery at Beit J'mal Convent, causing extensive destruction to numerous graves.

2015

- **25 February:** Settlers [torched](#) the Greek Orthodox Church Monastery of Zion, causing extensive damage to the school room and toilet facility used by priests and seminarians. The monastery, which accommodates the patriarchal seminary, was also vandalised with anti-Christian and anti-Christ graffiti.

2014

- **8 May:** In a suspected 'price tag' incident, Israeli settlers [vandalised](#) the Romanian Orthodox Church on Hahoma Hashlishit street in the Old City of Jerusalem with anti-Christian and anti-Arab graffiti on the site's walls reading: "Jesus is garbage" and "King David for the Jews."
- **5 May:** Israeli settlers [vandalised](#) the walls of the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem, a property owned by the Vatican. They wrote racist graffiti reading: "Death to Arabs and Christians."
- **31 March:** Israeli settlers [vandalised](#) the Deir Rafat Convent of the Roman Catholic Church with racist graffiti reading: "Mary is a cow." During the attack, the settlers slashed the tyres of five vehicles in the vicinity.

- **January:** The walls of the Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center were [defaced](#) with Hebrew graffiti calling for the expulsion of Christians.

2013

- **6 November:** The Jerusalem municipality, accompanied by the Israeli forces, [demolished a house](#) built on the property of the Latin Patriarchate. The house, located on the Jerusalem-Hebron Road, housed a family of 14 members.
- **10 October:** Settlers [broke into](#) the Protestant Cemetery of Mount Zion, toppling stone crosses from graves and smashing them into pieces.
- **1 October:** Israeli extremists [damaged](#) a gravestone in a Christian cemetery belonging to the Latin Patriarchate in Occupied Jerusalem. They also ripped the tyres of six cars and vandalised them. They wrote racist graffiti on the cemetery's walls reading: "Revenge" and "Price Tag."
- **19 August:** The Beit J'mal Monastery was hit with a [firebomb attack](#), causing damage to the monastery's exterior. It was also defaced with graffiti reading: "Price tag."
- **28 July:** Israeli forces [raided](#) Bethlehem's Cremisan Monastery, confined the worshippers within the monastery and inspected their documents.
- **12 June:** An Orthodox cemetery in Jaffa was [vandalised](#) was vandalised with 'price tag' and 'revenge.' The vandals spray-painted the Star of David on tombstones. Similar graffiti was discovered on a nearby residential building, and five nearby cars had their tyres slashed.
- **31 May:** The Dormition Abbey was vandalised with graffiti, and anti-Christian insults in Hebrew smeared the abbey's walls. Two nearby cars were also vandalised, and their tyres were slashed. The [graffiti](#) included: "Price tag", 'Christians are apes', and 'Jesus is a monkey.'
- **28 May:** Israeli settlers punctured the tyres of a car belonging to a lawyer from Saint Yves', a Catholic human rights organisation, in front of her residence in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of Jerusalem. They also vandalised and spray-painted hate slogans on the lawyer's neighbours' cars`.
- **28 April:** A group of armed Israeli settlers, under the protection of Israeli soldiers, [set fire](#) to the land belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church in Wadi Hilweh.
- **19 April:** A group of Israeli settlers forcibly entered and [occupied](#) a monastery

in the Palestinian village of Taybeh and raised the Israeli flag.

2012

- **12 December:** [Two separate](#) “price tag” incidents occurred in Jerusalem and Ramallah. In Jerusalem, a monastery in the Valley of the Cross was defaced with hate slogans in Hebrew that read: “including “Jesus is a son of a b****h” Additionally, three cars had their tyres slashed, and one was vandalised with graffiti reading: “Happy Hanukkah, a triumph for the Maccabees.” In the Ramallah district, a car was torched, and graffiti was found nearby.
- **8 October:** Israeli extremists [assaulted](#) the St. George Romanian Orthodox Church by pelting it with stones, bottles and garbage at its entrance.
- **2 October:** Vandals [attacked](#) the Franciscan Convent adjacent to the Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion, spray-painting it with anti-Christian graffiti reading: “Price tag” and “Jesus is a bastard” on the convent’s door.
- **4 September:** The door of the Abbey de Notre-Dame de Sept-Douleurs, a monastery in Al-Latrun, was [set on fire](#) and vandalised with anti-Christian slogans reading: “Migron” and “Jesus is a Monkey”.
- **21 February:** The Narkis Street Baptist Congregation was [assaulted](#) and vandalised with hate slogans that read: “Jesus is dead”, “Death to Christianity”, and “Mary was a prostitute.” This attack was believed to be part of a series of “price tag” attacks targeting Christian, Muslim, and leftist institutions in Jerusalem.

2011

- **21 December:** A bus carrying choir members from the Bethlehem Bible College was [attacked](#) near Nablus, where settlers pelted the bus with rocks and broke some of its windows.
- **7 October:** Settlers [targeted](#) two cemeteries in Jaffa, one Christian and the other Muslim, smashing and vandalising headstones with racist slogans reading: “Death to Arabs” and “Price tag”.

Other Attacks

- In February 2018, the municipality announced its intent to levy [municipal taxes](#) on churches and their properties in Occupied Jerusalem. In response to the change in the churches' "exemption status", church leaders temporarily closed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Subsequently, Israel [suspended](#) the tax collection legislation, and the church leaders decided to reopen the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. However, Christian leaders remain concerned about the potential implications of such legislation in the future⁸.
- Renewing visas for non-citizen or resident priests at the Patriarchate of Jerusalem can be very challenging, as Israeli authorities frequently reject visa applications, citing "due cause". For instance, in 1982, the Interior Ministry declined [to renew the visa](#) of Archbishop Karekin Kazanjian, the Grand Sacristan of the Church in Jerusalem, amid rumours of impending deportation. While the Interior Minister stated that there were no immediate plans for Kazanjian's expulsion, his visa renewal was not approved, eventually leading the archbishop to leave the country voluntarily.
- Christians in Jerusalem encounter restrictions on their ability to worship freely or access Holy Shrines, necessitating permits from the military authority. This permit system operates selectively and unpredictably, resulting in the denial of licenses to many individuals. For instance, one tactic employed by the Israeli authorities is issuing permits to selected family members during Christian holidays, thereby preventing the entire family from fully participating in their religious celebrations⁹.
- Apart from the tangible aspects of occupation and the associated constraints on movement and religious freedom, Israel also utilised non-physical strategies to undermine the presence of Christians in Palestine. These tactics involve personal attacks aimed at silencing and discrediting the Palestinian Christian narrative. For example, in 2012, Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren

⁸ Throughout various historical periods, including the Ottoman era, the British Mandate of Palestine, Jordanian governance, and the Israeli occupation since 1967, "no taxation" has been a prevalent policy whereby all church properties were exempt from taxation.

⁹ For a comprehensive examination of the strategies and tactics employed by occupation forces to constrain the access of Christians to Jerusalem and other Christian communities through Palestine, where they already represent a minority, see: ACT Palestine Forum (2013) 'The "Permit Regime" and Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Freedom to Worship' Available at: <http://actpalestineforum.org/files/The-%E2%80%99CPermit-Regime%E2%80%9D-and-Israeli-Attacks-on-Palestinian-Freedom-of-Worship.pdf>

endeavoured to obstruct a segment on the challenges faced by Christians in the WB that was planned for [CBS's "60 Minutes" program](#).

04. CONCLUSION

*It is vital to recognise that incitement transcends **theological boundaries**, as it represents a **settler-colonial project** intent on the erasure of Palestinian communities.*

Since the 1948 Nakba, followed by the June 1967 occupation of the rest of Palestine, i.e., the West Bank, East Jerusalem included, and the Gaza Strip, there has been an alarming and consistent escalation of attacks against Christians and their holy sites, with an unprecedented surge in 2023. Jerusalem has become the epicentre of such prejudice, where a multitude of discriminatory measures, such as stringent movement restrictions, arbitrary event cancellations, acts of vandalism, and targeted assaults on religious leaders and sites, have taken root, eroding the city's religious, spiritual, and cultural fabric.

The consequences of these actions are profound, directly impeding the ability of Christians to engage in pilgrimages, ceremonies, and religious celebrations. Israeli occupation forces employ direct and indirect mechanisms of control to curtail the presence of Palestinian Christians in Jerusalem by governmentalising fear and uncertainty to deter Christian worshippers and pilgrims. This unsettling trend not only jeopardises the rich tapestry of Palestine but also threatens the sanctity of Jerusalem, a city of profound significance to all three monotheistic faiths.

What becomes increasingly evident is that these discriminatory practices are part of Israel's broader strategy aimed at the gradual "Judaization" of Jerusalem. This multifaceted approach encompasses various tactics such as greenwashing through land appropriation, curtailing religious freedom through anti-proselytism laws, and imposing economic restrictions that hinder religious tourism, property ownership, and the livelihoods of shopkeepers in the Old City. All these tactics are aligned with Israel's ideology of Jewish supremacy and systemic annexation of the West Bank.

Thus, it is vital to recognise that incitement transcends theological boundaries, as it represents a settler-colonial project intent on the erasure of Palestinian communities.

INDEX 1: STATEMENTS – APPEALS BY CHURCHES IN THE HOLY LAND¹⁰

2024

- **2 September:** “[Churches for Middle East Peace](#) Condemns the Escalation of Settler Violence and Illegal Land Confiscation in the West Bank”
- **16 August:** “[Statement](#) by the Jerusalem Patriarchate on Israel’s Impediments to freedom of worship”
- **13 July:** “[WCC condemns](#) attacks on St Porphyrius Church in Gaza and Golan Heights”
- **9 July:** [Statement by Holy See Press Office:](#) “Holy Father has learned with great sorrow the news (...) about attacks against a school in Gaza. The Pope expresses his deep shock at the escalation of violence (...).”
- **8 July:** [World Council of Churches strongly condemns](#) attacks on Sacred Family School in Gaza, closure of hospital
- **7 July:** [Press Release](#) by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem condemning Israeli’s raids against Sacred Family School in Gaza
- **19 June:** [The Pope calls for urgent aid for Gaza](#) and encourages peace efforts
- **12 June:** The Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches Issues a [Statement](#) on the Escalating Crisis in Gaza
- **May 2024:** US Catholics [letter](#) pleading for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and calling on “President Biden, a fellow Catholic, and other U.S. and international leaders, to do everything possible to ensure a permanent end to hostilities, including halting additional shipments of U.S.-funded offensive weapons to Israel.”
- **3 April:** World Council of Churches (WCC) condemns in a [statement](#) the killing of aid workers in Gaza

¹⁰ This is a selective and non-exhaustive list.

- **1 March:** World Council of Churches [Statement](#) “on the recent attack on crowds gathering to receive humanitarian aid.”

2023

- **16 December:** [Statement](#) by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem against Israel’s killing of two Christian women in the Holy Family Catholic Church in Gaza City
- **13 December:** A [Press Release](#) by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem titled “ The Patriarch of Jerusalem Addresses the Urgency for a Ceasefire in Gaza and affirms commitment to multi-religious coexistence in Jerusalem”
- **13 December:** [Statement](#) from England’s House of Bishops on the ongoing War in Gaza
- **31 October:** [Statement](#) by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem “The Israeli Shelling of Orthodox Cultural Center Embodies Unjustifiable Targeting of Civilian Infrastructure in Gaza”
- **31 October:** [Statement](#) from the House of Anglican Bishops on the war on Gaza
- **21 October:** [Statement](#) by the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem:” Jerusalem’s Christian Spiritual Leaders Host the Archbishop of Canterbury and Collectively Call for Restraint, De-escalation of Violence and Protection of Civilians”
- **20 October:** [Statement](#) by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem condemning the bombardment of Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital: “The Patriarchate in Jerusalem condemns Israeli airstrikes targeting humanitarian institutions in Gaza.”
- **20 October:** [Statement](#) by the World Council of Churches “ condemns attack on building adjacent to St. Porphyrios Greek Orthodox Church in Gaza”
- **20 October:** Joint Anglican-Catholic bishops' [statement](#) on the Israel-Palestine conflict
- **17 October:** Statement of the World Council of Churches: “Outraged at the news of the attack on a hospital in Gaza, calls for justice and human dignity.”
- **18 October:** [Statement](#) of the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem denouncing Israel’s bombing of Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza

- **13 October:** [Statement](#) of the Patriarchs and the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem on the Escalating Humanitarian Crises in Gaza
- **12 October:** [Statement](#) from the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem regarding the aggression on Gaza
- **12 October:** Church leaders in the Holy Land [call](#) for de-escalation, respect for human rights
- **5 October-** [Statement](#) by Bishop Dr. Sani Azar, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, on the rising religious attacks against Christians.
- **28 July:** The Assembly of the Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land issued a [statement](#) condemning the attacks by radical Jews and settlers on Christians and their holy sites in Jerusalem and Haifa.
- **22 July –** The WCC General Secretary, Jerry Pillay, issued a [statement](#) condemning the infringement on religious freedom after thousands of Orthodox Christians were denied access to Mount Tabor.
- **7 July –** The Anglican, Orthodox, and Catholic churches, together with the WCC, [condemned](#) Jenin attacks and called “for a ceasefire and an end to the occupation.”
- **7 July:** In a [statement](#) published on Facebook, Dr Hosam Naoum, the Primate of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East and Archbishop in Jerusalem, strongly condemned the Israeli attack against Jenin and the Catholic Church.
- **4 July:** The [Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem](#), the [Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem](#), and the [US Churches for Middle East Peace](#) issued statements condemning Israel's attack on Jenin and the extensive damage to the Catholic Church in Jenin.
- **14 April:** The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate started the Holy Light Ceremony in response to the Israeli police statement.
- **12 April:** The Status Quo Committee of the Churches issued a [statement](#) addressing the unreasonable restriction imposed by the Israeli police on the Holy Light Saturday Ceremony, particularly the unprecedented limitation on access to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
- **12 April:** The WCC cited the Israeli restrictions during Easter and Holy Fire Saturday and advocated “freedom of access to worship in the Holy Land and preservation of the Status Quo of Jerusalem.”

- **1 April:** In a joint [statement](#), the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches of Jerusalem condemned the recent escalation in violence and called upon the Israeli authorities to adopt policies promoting religious tolerance and de-escalate the conflict.
- **29 March:** The Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) issued a [statement](#), joining US Christian faith Leaders in expressing support for the Christian Community in Jerusalem following the attack at the Church of Gethsemane.
- **21 March:** The Armenian Patriarchate issued a [statement](#) denouncing the settler attack on St. Mary's Church.
- **21 March:** The WCC's General Secretary, Jerry Pillay, issued a [statement](#) condemning the settler attack against the Church of Gethsemane.
- **19 March:** The Greek Patriarchate issued a [statement](#) condemning "the heinous terrorist attack" carried out by two Israeli extremists against the Church of Gethsemane in Jerusalem.
- **27 January:** Two separate statements were issued by the [Assembly of the Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land](#) and [the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem](#), both condemning settler attacks targeting tourists and storekeepers at the New Gate.
- **9 January:** Pope Francis expressed his [concern](#) over the escalating violence in Jerusalem and emphasised the importance of maintaining Jerusalem's historical and legal status quo.
- **4 January:** The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East issued a [statement](#) addressing the recent vandalism and desecration of the Protestant Cemetery on Mount Zion.
- **4 January:** The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem issued a [statement](#) condemning the desecration of gravestones at the Protestant Cemetery in Mount Zion, categorising them as "terrorist acts", and called on the Israeli authorities to hold the perpetrators accountable.
- **4 January:** The World Council of Churches (WCC) issued a [statement](#) strongly condemning the attacks on the Protestant cemetery in Mount Zion.

2022

- **28 December:** The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate issued a [statement](#) protesting the illegal takeover of a Church in Silwan.
- **16 May:** The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa,

and the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos II, issued a joint [statement](#) condemning the Israeli police's violent intrusion into the funeral processions of Shireen Abu Akleh at the St. Joseph Hospital.

- **11 May:** The [CMEP](#), [WCC](#), [The Evangelical Lutheran Church](#), and the [Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem](#) issued statements condemning the killing of Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.
- **21 April:** The Jerusalem Patriarchate issued a [statement](#) rejecting the proposed restrictions on the Holy Fire ceremonies in Jerusalem.
- **4 April:** The Patriarchs and Heads of Local Churches of Jerusalem issued a [statement](#) condemning the illegal seizure of the “Little Petra Hotel” in Jerusalem’s Jaffa Gate by an Israeli Extremist Group operating under the protection of the Israeli police.
- **18 February:** The Churches for Middle East Peace issued a [statement](#) expressing concern and unequivocal objection to the appropriation of the Mount of Olives for the construction of a National Park.
- **10 January:** During his [speech](#) in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve, the Greek Patriarch characterised the assaults on Christians committed by Israeli radical groups as a “deliberate attempt to expel Christians from Jerusalem and other parts of the Holy Land.”

2021

- **13 December:** The Patriarchs and Heads of Local Churches of Jerusalem signed a [joint statement](#) addressing “the current threat to the Christian presence in the Holy Land.” Appealing to both Israeli and Palestinian civil authorities, the primary objective was to safeguard the cultural and religious heritage of the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem, particularly in the face of incidents involving settler violence.
- **1 September:** H.B. Theophilos III, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Father Francesco Patton, the Custodian of the Holy Land, jointly signed a letter rejecting the Municipality’s arrangement of “irrelevant” activities taking place at one vital entrance to the Christian Quarter. This entrance leads to their monastic facilities, religious establishments, and educational institutions. Furthermore, they emphasised that as the exclusive owners of the properties along this street, no prior authorisation or consent was sought or obtained for hosting such activities.¹¹

¹¹ A leaked unpublished letter shared with NAD.

Before 2021

- **7 May 2020:** The Patriarchates and Heads of the Holy Land Churches issued a [statement](#) addressing Israel's unilateral annexation plans and their adverse impact on the pursuit of a resolution. The religious leaders appealed to the international community, particularly the US, EU, and Russia, to promote a peace initiative compliant with international law and UN resolutions.
- **25 February 2018:** In a [joint statement](#), the leaders of the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian churches stated the closure of the Church of Holy Sepulchre was to protest Israel's new tax policy and legal efforts related to land appropriation.
- **6 December 2017:** The Patriarchs and Heads of Local Churches sent a [letter](#) to U.S. President Donald Trump, appealing to him to maintain Jerusalem's current international status and avoid sudden changes. They expressed concern that abrupt alterations could lead to increased violence and suffering in the city. The letter stressed Jerusalem's significance as a city of peace for all its inhabitants and called for a political process to facilitate sustainable and equitable peace.
- **19-20 April 2016:** At the inaugural Atlanta Summit of Churches in the USA and the Holy Land, participants issued a peace [statement](#) highlighting the theological and ethical urgency of achieving a just peace in the Holy Land. The statement emphasised the importance of ending the occupation, supporting a two-state solution, and strengthening the Christian presence in Palestine.
- **29 September 2006:** The Patriarchs and Heads of Local Churches in Jerusalem drafted a [statement](#) concerning the status of Jerusalem. The Statement called for a just and enduring peace in the city, recognising the sacredness of the three monotheistic religions. It emphasised the necessity of international cooperation, special status for Jerusalem and the collaboration between political and religious leaders to ensure freedom of worship, equality, and open access for all its residents.
- **17 July 2000:** During the 2000 Camp David Summit, Christian leaders of Jerusalem issued a [statement](#) requesting representation in the Camp David talks and future peace summits addressing Jerusalem's status. Their objective was to safeguard the rights of Christians in the city and ensure the preservation of the undivided Christian and Armenian quarters in the Old City. The statement underscored Jerusalem's historical and religious significance to Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

INDEX 2: OTHER STATEMENTS – PALESTINIAN CHRISTIANS IN THE MEDIA, 2021-2024

2024

- **9 November:** “Palestinian Christians despair as Gaza homeland destroyed by Israel’s war” ([Aljazeera](#))
- **1 October:** “The [Supreme Presidential Committee for Church Affairs](#) Condemns the Demolition (By IOF) of Church Model and Agricultural Structures in Beit Jala”
- 12 July: Christians in occupied Jerusalem see a marked surge in Israeli settler attacks, published by the [cradle](#)
- **26 August:** “The [Supreme Presidential Committee for Church Affairs](#) in Palestine Calls for Global Action Against Extremist Ben-Gvir’s Remarks to Build a Synagogue in Al-Aqsa Mosque”
- **2 August:** “Armenians and Israeli settlers clash over land in Old City Jerusalem” ([Eurasian](#))
- **12 July:** “[Settler attacks](#) escalate against Christians in occupied Jerusalem.”
- **9 July:** The [Supreme Presidential Committee for Church Affairs](#) calls on the International Community to Fulfill its Responsibility and Stop Israel’s Crimes and Attacks on Hospitals and Shelter Centers in Gaza
- **5 May:** [Wafa](#) reports about Easter in Gaza: “Sounds of bombs overwhelm church hymns”, interview with Jameel Tarazi, one of the Christians who lost his son in an Israeli airstrike that targeted the Church of St. Porphyrius in Gaza
- **2 May:** The EU Heads of Mission met in Jerusalem with representatives of several Christian Churches and the Armenian community and issued a [statement](#) voicing deep concerns over the growing escalating violations against Christians in the Holy Land.
- **24 April 2023:** [New Arab](#) opinion: “Israel is deliberately trying to de-Christianise Jerusalem”
- **9 April:** Agenzia Fides [interview](#) with Father Ibrahim Faltas: “War also darkens the future of Christians in the Land of Jesus.”
- **8 April:** [Statement](#) by Religious Leaders from Various Churches Denouncing the Calls of the Temple Institute to perform the “Red Heifer Sacrifice”
- **4 April:** The [Supreme Presidential Committee for Church Affairs](#) in Palestine warns against the ongoing attempt by the Israeli occupation authorities to assert control over the properties of the Armenian Patriarchate in occupied Jerusalem.
- **31 March:** New Arab [article](#) on Israeli restrictions on Palestinian Christians’ access to the old city to attend Easter celebrations: “Grim Easter for Gaza’s Christians, Jerusalem churches empty.”

- **28 March:** [New Arab](#) opinion title “This Easter, Gaza's Christian community is on the brink of extinction”
- **26 February:** Mission Network News [article](#) “Stay or go? Palestinian Christians face a difficult choice.”
- **17 February:** Times of Israel [article](#) about Gaza Christians: “Since the start of Israel-Hamas war, 3% of Gaza's Christians dead.”
- **3 February:** In response to the incident of ultraorthodox Jews spitting on Christian clergyman in an old city on February 3: Khouri: [Settlers attacks on Christian Clergies and Muslim and Christian Holy Sites](#) in Jerusalem represent a continuation of the extremist Israeli government’s crime of genocide in the Gaza Strip.”
- **24 January:** The New Yorker [article](#) about Christians in Gaza titled “The Dilemma of Gaza’s Christians.”

2023

- **16 December:** [Statement](#) by the Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine condemning Israel’s continuous genocide in Gaza and urges the International community to act to stop these crimes and hold the Israeli war criminals accountable
- **14 December:** an [article](#) in La Croix titled “In Jerusalem, the Armenian quarter resists threats from settlers.”
- **11 December:** Local [EU statement](#) on the Mount of Olives and the Christian Presence in Jerusalem
- **10 November:** an [article](#) in Al-Jazeera titled “Gaza’s Christians fear ‘threat of extinction’ amid Israel war”
- **06 November:** an [article](#) in BBC titled “Gaza's Christians fear for survival amid Israel-Hamas war”
- **02 November:** Los Angeles Times published an [op-ed](#) titled “Palestinian Christians are losing loved ones in Israel’s bombing in Gaza. Where’s the outcry from Western Christian communities?”
- **01 November:** Joint Kairos Southern Africa and Kairos Palestine [Open Letter](#) to Church leaders and Christians in the USA, Europe and the Ecumenical Family against Israel’s war on Gaza
- **31 October:** [Statement](#) by the Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs on Palestine “calls upon the international community to put an end to Israel’s unjust war on Gaza, following the bombardment of the Arab Orthodox Cultural Center in Gaza.”

- **23 October:** “A Call for Repentance: An [Open Letter](#) from Palestinian Christians to Western Church Leaders and Theologians”
- **21 October:** Kairos Palestine [call](#) after the bombing of the Greek Orthodox Church of Saint Porphyrius in Gaza
- **20 October:** [Statement](#) by the Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs on Palestine: “Israeli bombardment of St. Prophurius Greek Orthodox Church is a war crime.”
- **20 October:** [Article](#) titled “Gaza Palestinian Christians who are they?” published in the New Arab
- **11 October:** Kairos Palestine [statement](#) on the war on Gaza
- **10 October:** A [Report](#) by the Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs “Israeli violations against Christians in Palestine 2023”
- **4 October:** “The Supreme Presidential Committee for Church Affairs” [statement](#) on Ben Gvir’s remarks about the assault on Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem “are serious, and are a clear and direct threat to Christians in the Holy Land.”
- **23 July:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs issued a [statement](#) condemning the attack by radical Jews against the Saint Elias Monastery in Haifa. The statement was a follow-up to the [statement](#) issued on July 18.
- **21 July:** Haaretz newspaper published an [op-ed](#) titled “Under Netanyahu, Israel Is Treating Christians With Intensified Contempt.”
- **19 July:** The Islamic-Christian Committee in Support for Jerusalem and its Sanctuaries released a [statement](#) condemning the attacks by Jewish religious groups on the Church and Monastery of Saint Elias in Haifa.
- **9 July:** The Times of Israel newspaper published an [article](#) citing Israel’s President Isaac Herzog’s condemnation of the growing attacks against Christians in Israel.
- **29 June:** The American Magazine published an [article](#) titled “Anti-Christian incidents are on the rise in Jerusalem’s Old City.”
- **26 June:** La Croix published an [interview](#) with Israeli journalist Yossi Eli in which he explained that the increase in hostility towards Christians in Jerusalem is attributed to a lack of education
- **28 May:** Israel Hayom, an Israeli right-wing newspaper, published an [article](#) reporting Israeli settlers’ harassment of Christian pilgrims near the Dung Gate.
- **20 April:** NBS News published an [article](#) titled “Christians in the Holy Land say

they're under attack as Israeli-Palestinian violence soars.”

- **14 April:** The Christian Science Monitor published an [article](#) titled “Israel failing to stop attack on Christians, Jerusalem churches say.”
- **14 April:** The Middle East Eye (MEE) published an [article](#) titled “Jerusalem: Catholic patriarch decries spike in anti-Christian attacks by Israelis.”
- **13 April:** The Islamic-Christian Commission [condemned](#) the arbitrary cancellation of permits for Palestinian Christians in Gaza, describing it as “an affront to their freedom to worship.”
- **13 April:** The Associated Press (AP) published a [report](#) on “Holy Land Christians Say Attacks Rising in Far-Right Israel.”
- **12 April:** In a statement, the Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs condemned Israeli restrictions during Holy Fire Saturday.
- **12 April:** Haaretz newspaper published an [article](#) titled “‘Holy Fire’ Celebrations ‘Unreasonably Restricted’ by Israeli Police, Jerusalem Church says.”
- **12 April:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine called in a [statement](#) on Palestinian Christians to participate in large numbers in the Holy Light activities in Jerusalem despite Israeli Occupation measures.
- **9 April:** Al-Jazeera newspaper published an [article](#) titled “‘Death to Christians’: Violence steps up under new Israeli gov’t.”
- **30 March:** The Times of Israel newspaper published an [article](#) titled “As attacks on Christians become more frequent, a crisis looms for Israel.”
- **26 March:** Haaretz newspaper published an [article](#) titled “Anti-Christian Hate Crimes in Jerusalem Soaring this year.”
- **24 March:** Maria Zakharova, the Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, released an [official statement](#) demanding that Israeli authorities take necessary measures to prosecute the perpetrators of the attack on the Church of Gethsemane.
- **19 March:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs released a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settler attacks on the Church of Gethsemane.
- **17 March:** Towards Freedom newspaper published an article titled “Jerusalem’s Christians Attribute Rise in Violence to Israel’s New Government.”
- **2 February:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settler attacks against the Church of Condemnation.

- **29 January:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settler attacks against the Armenian Patriarchate.
- **22 January:** The Catholic Herald published an [article](#) titled “The Christian Presence in the Holy Land is Under Threat.”
- **12 January:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settlers' vandalism of the walls of the Armenian Patriarchate with anti-Christian graffiti.
- **5 January:** Deborah Lipstadt, the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, posted a statement on [Twitter](#) condemning the Israeli settlers' desecration of Christian graves in the Protestant Cemetery on Mount Zion as a “despicable act.”
- **4 January:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settlers targeting the Protestant Cemetery on Mount Zion.
- **4 January:** The British Consulate in Jerusalem used its official [Twitter](#) account to denounce the Israeli settler attacks on the Protestant Cemetery on Mount Zion and urged Israeli authorities to hold the perpetrators accountable.

2022

- **30 December:** The EU urged Israel in a [statement](#) to protect the status quo and the Holy Sites in occupied Jerusalem following the takeover of the Greek Patriarchate property in Silwan.
- **30 December:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) welcoming the EU's demand to halt attempts to take over the property of the Christians Churches.
- **27 December:** The Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) condemning settlers' storming and takeover of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate property in Wadi Hilweh.
- **25 December:** The Daily Mail published an [article](#) titled “Church cries for help as Christians are driven from the Holy Land: Fears the faith will be a little more than a ‘museum piece’ in Jerusalem after followers of Jesus fell by two thirds to 10,000 since 1948.”
- **23 December:** Dr. Ramzi Khoury, Chairman of the Supreme Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs, commended the Presbyterian Church's

national position as he participated in the Christmas Mass.

- **10 October:** The Patriarchates and Heads Churches in Jerusalem issued a [statement](#) calling for the review of the location of the British embassy in Israel.
- **15 July:** Greek Patriarch Theophilos III drafted a [letter](#) addressing President Biden about his visit to Bethlehem.
- **12 June:** The Churches for Middle East Peace issued a [statement](#) expressing disappointment at Israel's court ruling that led to the takeover of Greek Orthodox Church property in Jerusalem.
- **10 June:** The EU released a [statement](#) regarding the status of the Churches in the Old City of Jerusalem and Israel's Supreme Court's decision on Christian property in Jaffa Gate.
- **29 April:** A bipartisan [letter](#) from the US Congress was addressed to Anthony Blinken, US Secretary of State, expressing concern about Israel's increased attacks on Christians in Jerusalem.
- **7 January:** His Holiness Patriarch Kirill issued a [statement](#) affirming their support for the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

2021

- **21 December:** In response to the historically low birth rates among the Christian community, the Protecting Holy Land Christians initiated a [campaign](#) to preserve the Christian community.
- **18 December:** The Telegraph newspaper published an [article](#) titled "Holy Land Christians are at threat of extinction."
- **9 December:** Patriarch Theophilos III delivered a [speech](#) celebrating the positive impact of Christians in the Holy Land at the Imperial Hotel in Jaffa Gate during the Christmas tree light event.

INDEX 3: APPEALS BY THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

- Christian organisations have issued numerous statements and appeals concerning challenges to Christians in the Holy Land. Notably, on 19 April 2022, leaders of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, and the Custodian of the Holy Land submitted an appeal to the Israeli President regarding restrictions on Christian access to the Holy Sepulchre Church during Holy Fire Saturday and Easter.
- On 13 July 2022, Bernard Sabella, Executive Secretary of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees of the Middle East Council of Churches and an elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, addressed an [open letter](#) to President Biden, urging him to heed the aspirations of Palestinians striving for peace and justice.
- On 21 August 2023, a coalition of 17 Palestinian Christian organisations signed a strongly worded [statement](#) denouncing the longstanding illegal lease of the historical Armenian Garden known as the Cows' Garden.