



Kairos Palestine
Easter Appeal
2024

Kairos Palestine Easter Appeal 2024

Kairos Palestine would like to thank all those who contributed to the Easter Appeal 2024. Special thanks go to Mays Nassar for compiling and translating the Easter Appeal to Arabic, Jeff Wright for language editing ,MECC DSPR, MA'AN Development Center and SOS Children's Villages Palestine for allowing us to use some of their photos and Nasri Khoury for the graphics.

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...Hope is the capacity to see God in the midst of trouble, and to be co-workers with the Holy Spirit who is dwelling in us. From this vision derives the strength to be steadfast, remain firm and work to change the reality in which we find ourselves. Hope means not giving in to evil but rather standing up to it and continuing to resist it..

Kairos Palestine document, § 3.2

Foreword

“That’s what happened,” Jesus continued, “the people were attacked, stripped, robbed, beaten, and left for dead. So, who do you think turned out to be a neighbor to those who were attacked?”

See Luke 10

For many years, Kairos Palestine has issued an Easter Alert to our friends around the globe. We have described the effects of Israel’s brutal occupation, exposed its laws, policies and practices amounting to the international crime of apartheid, and called the church—through Scripture, reflections and prayer—to join us in insisting on our human rights and the right to determine our future. Your solidarity has helped sustain us.

But this year, the genocidal war and humanitarian crisis in Gaza compels us to issue an Easter Appeal for your financial support as well as your prayers, advocacy and lobby for the people of Gaza—our Muslim and Christian siblings suffering the physical, emotional, structural and cultural effects of a growing genocide on the part of the State of Israel. We are sharing the names of three respected Palestinian organizations, the staffs of which are present in Gaza addressing the physical and psychological needs of the people there. We boldly seek your generous financial support for the work of these trusted, effective organizations.

Current Realities in Palestine

Easter this year will mark the start of the 26th week of Israel's assault on Gaza. From the start of the war, Kairos Palestine has consistently condemned all attacks on civilians, especially defenseless families and children. Still, we continue to be shocked and discouraged by the silence of church leaders and theologians in the face of ever-growing numbers of the dead in Gaza, the unhoused, the ill, the unattended injured, and the starving. The pictures coming out of Gaza—both from Palestinians and members of the Israeli occupation army—are appalling. The statistics are staggering: over 30,000 dead, 1.8 million displaced, one-half million on the brink of starvation. Each evening during Ramadan, West Bank Muslims celebrate a break in their fast with a community meal; most Gazan Muslims don't have even one date with which to break their fast and celebrate their faith.

Human rights organizations and the head of the United Nations—along with others—have declared a humanitarian disaster. Still, we don't understand how some Christians still support the ongoing indiscriminate attacks on Gaza and their country's supply to Israel of weapons, intelligence and cover from international law—in spite of the fact that Israel's colonial, racist apartheid project has turned now into an ongoing genocide.



Destroyed neighborhood in Gaza. (Yahyah Hassouna)

While the world's attention has focused on Gaza, in the West Bank murder at the hands of settlers and the Israel occupation army, house demolitions, travel restrictions, ethnic cleansing and illegal Israeli settlement building are growing at an unprecedented rate. As one Christian said, "The uncertainty of our situation in the West Bank is overwhelming. We never know what Israel may do next. If a thief breaks into your house, you call the police. If there's a fire, you call the community's firefighters. But there is no one to call when Israeli soldier stop and threaten us with impunity, when settlers amass and march on villages, when the occupation army knocks on our door. We feel helpless, powerless. We feel anxious, abandoned. Ours are tears for ourselves and our own families as well as those in Gaza."

Our call remains clear and insistent: a permanent ceasefire, the free flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza, a negotiated release of all people captured on both sides, an end to the occupation, and the right to Palestinian self-determination.

We reaffirm our support for the work of UNRWA, and warn against any infringement on its legal status and work, as it is one of the only organizations equipped to provide relief services and humanitarian assistance to about 70% of the Palestinian population in Gaza strip and the last hope for Palestinians to not be forcibly and/or voluntary displaced to Sinai in Egypt. Ending UNRWA is an extension of the crime of genocide.

We thank God for friends around the globe who are demonstrating in the streets, risking arrest for their acts of civil disobedience, repeatedly confronting their elected representatives demanding a permanent ceasefire, the free flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza, an end to Israel's occupation, and the Palestinian right to self-determination. We implore you to continue this work and witness.

**There is something more that every one of us can do,
that we are pleading with you to do:**

Please, be the neighbor Jesus described: pick one or more of the following agencies that are feeding, housing, medically treating, counseling and praying with the people of Gaza, and give generously. You, your faith community, student group, union, sports team, book club or other gathering will make a difference with your gifts.

During this Holy Week, as always, we find courage in the solidarity we receive from the Crucified Christ; we find hope in the Empty Tomb. Please know this: Palestinian Christians are still fully committed to the way of Jesus in creative nonviolent resistance as described in our founding document, A Word of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering (KP, 2009), using “the logic of love and draw[ing] on all energies to make peace” (KP, §4.2.5).”

Once again, we affirm our declaration: “In the absence of all hope, we cry out our cry of hope. We believe in God, good and just. We believe that God’s goodness will finally triumph over the evil of hate and of death that still persist in our land. We will see here ‘a new land’ and ‘a new human being’, capable of rising up in the spirit to love each one of his or her brothers and sisters” (Kairos Palestine document, §10).

Organizations that are making a difference in the lives of Gazans

1- The Middle East Council of Churches, Department of the Palestinian Refugees (MECC-DSPR)

MECC-DSPR is a faith-based Christian organization founded in 1949 as a humanitarian response to Al Nakba (the Catastrophe), lead and governed by the Four Families of Churches in the Middle East (Orthodox, Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant). MECC-DSPR is working with Palestinian refugees and IDPs in the Gaza Strip, Jerusalem and West Bank, Galilee, Lebanon, and Jordan. MECC-DSPR is running multi-dimensional programs and projects covering health and mental health, community and economic empowerment, humanitarian relief and emergency responses and Advocacy work.

In Gaza, MECC-DSPR has a long experience in responding to emergencies, including establishing health services, and providing medicines and supplements for sick children and mothers, offering mental health services and psychosocial support, distribution of food and non-food items. MECC-DSPR in Gaza has 103 staff to run the clinics, centers and outreach activities covering the whole Gaza strip, supported by the Central Office in Jerusalem.

During this unprecedented pain in Gaza, and despite the destruction of most of its clinics and centers as well as the horrific impact on staff, their families and their properties, MECC-DSPR is offering the following services:

- **Primary health care services:** An average of 500 patients are received daily in the clinic in Rafah. The Clinic offers primary health care services including but not limited to mothers and childcare, dental services, medicine and supplements, medical lab service, conducting health awareness workshops and distributing

hygiene/dignity kits.

- **Mental Health & Psychosocial Support:** MECC-DSPR organizes MHPSS interventions with the forcibly displaced people in the south of the Gaza Strip, including offering Psychological First Aid. We are mainly targeting children and women.
- **Cash support:** MECC-DSPR is supporting the most marginalized families with an average of 200 USD per household, the focus is on forcibly displaced families living in the tents, women led families, and people with disabilities.
- **Care to the Christians who are taking refuge in the Churches:** MECC-DSPR is assisting approximately 775 Christian individuals who have sought refuge in two churches in Gaza City and the surrounding community. The support includes distributing food, medical supplies, hygiene/dignity kits, as well as offering essential psychosocial care for children and mothers.



MECC-DSPR in Gaza has 103 staff to run the clinics, centers and outreach activities covering the whole Gaza strip. (MECC-DSPR)

You can support the important work of MECC-DSPR through donating to the following bank account:

DSPR Bank Details

Beneficiary's Name: **DSPR**

Beneficiary's Address: **Augusta Victoria Hospital Jerusalem**

Beneficiary's Account

Number: 9490-661508-510

Beneficiary's Bank:

Arab Bank

Al Balad Branch

Ramallah, Palestinian Territory

Bank #: **49**

Branch Code: **0864**

SWIFT CODE: **ARABPS22**

IBAN: **PS96 ARAB 0000 0000 9490 6615 0851 0**

Intermediary Bank:

CITI Bank N.A

New York –USA

Swift code:

CITIUS33XXX

ACCOUNT NO

36371743

2- MA'AN Development Center is an independent, non-governmental, non-partisan Palestinian development organization and training institution established in Jerusalem in January 1989 and is registered as a non-profit organization. Through almost three and a half decades of work, MA'AN has built a trust-based relationship with its beneficiaries and communities, gaining a highly credible reputation in the region distinguished by its community-driven development approach.

Our Vision is that “Palestinians enjoy a decent life, are steadfast on their land, clinging to their homeland, self-reliant, and leading their communities based on the respect of plurality, rule of law, social justice, equality and human rights.” We work to enhance the resilience, empowerment, and realization of the rights of those most in need, the poor and marginalized groups, and individuals, as well as to unleash their latent capabilities to enhance their active participation in sustainable development and their abilities to respond to and recover from crises.

MA'AN Center has been working since the beginning of this brutal war to provide all forms of support, providing around 11 million liters of drinking water and more than 44,000 hot meals for 88,000 individuals in central and southern Gaza. It has also provided more than 63,000 food parcels, tens of thousands of health and dignity kits and clothing, and has built 51 sanitary units, providing psychological support to children and mothers in 27 schools in Gaza, in addition to cleaning 27 schools daily to ensure cleanliness in shelters and bathrooms. It has also provided more than 4.33 million shekels in support to 5,700 families in the Strip, in addition to thousands of packs of sanitary pads and diapers for children, the elderly, and the disabled. It has also provided more than 3,300 Sealing Off kits and 170 tents for families who have been sleeping on sidewalks and streets after their homes were demolished. Over the past five months, the center has worked with many international and local institutions, individuals, and families to provide all forms of support and emergency interventions to address the humanitarian disaster resulting from the genocidal war being waged against our people.

You can support the important work of MA'AN Development Center through donating directly to the center's account:

Account Name: **MAAN Development Center**

Bank Name and Code: **Bank of Palestine, 89**

Branch and Branch Code: **Al Masyoun, 471**

Account #: **605424/00**

IBAN Code: **PS48 PALS 0471 0605 4240 0130 0000 0 (USD currency)**

PS33 PALS 0471 0605 4240 9930 0000 0 (ILS currency)

Swift Code: **PALSPS22**



Ma'an center has provided more than 44,000 hot meals for 88,000 individuals in central and southern Gaza (Ma'an Development Center).

3- SOS Children's Villages Palestine

About 19,000 children lost the warmth of their families or were separated from their parents during the war in Gaza, which increases the number of those without family care in Palestine to more than 70,000 children. For them, growing up is often more about survival and basic needs than playing and learning. We work at SOS Children's Villages Palestine to provide alternative care for dozens of children, focusing on the trust and warmth of strong human connections. We succeeded in opening a shelter for unaccompanied children separated from their parents due to the war in Gaza. In light of the continuing war and the economic situation that families are experiencing in Gaza and the West Bank, SOS Children's Villages has been able, over the past few months, to provide cash assistance to more than 6,700 individuals, children, and families, and has implemented more than 2,700 extracurricular and recreational



Displaced Palestinian child in Gaza sitting on the rubble of his house (SOS Children's Villages Palestine)

activities and counselling sessions for children and families.

In the month of Ramadan, the month of blessings and care, in which many people gather with their families and loved ones at the Iftar table, we remember more than 19,000 children who lost their caregivers during the war, and thousands of families who live in very difficult conditions and struggle to obtain basic necessities. We invite you to contribute to the “One Family supports another” campaign to support children without family care and the most affected families.

You can support the important work of SOS Children's Villages Palestine by contributing or donating through the link below:

<https://www.sos-palestine.org/donate/>

Kairos Palestine Easter Message 2024

By: Patriarch Emeritus, Michel Sabbah

"Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace which the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid"

(Jn 14: 27).

Christ is risen! Indeed, he is risen.

Happy and Holy Easter. Happiness and holiness are the fruits of Easter. They are the new life brought by the risen Christ, with Peace, Justice and Equality. Happiness and holiness, which are the absence of war from people's hearts, the peace and glory of the resurrection and new life in our entire land, and in Gaza, and the end of the destructive assault in Rafah, and the end of all human evil, everywhere.

Christ has risen to bring new light and a new life to our land.

Christmas came this year while we were in the darkness of war and among the ruins. Today comes the Feast of Resurrection during the same war, continuous and intense in death and destruction, until the crushing of the human being and genocide. Christmas told us to listen to the Word of God who speaks peace, and on this glorious Easter, God continues to say to us: Peace. Christmas told us to look to Mount Calvary, which complements the Grotto of the Nativity. And look at Gaza, where people are dying, where not only tens of thousands are dying, and where there are not only two million people being tortured on the ground, and soldiers' sniping, and not just children and infants, not just boys, men and women, but where the human being is dying. The killer himself dies, dead while thinking he is alive.

We find ourselves in a sacred period where religious communities engage in acts of spiritual devotion. Christians observe fasting as they prepare for the Resurrection, while Muslims dedicate themselves to supplication during the holy month of Ramadan. Soon, Jews will commemorate Passover, which is a memory of their liberation from bondage. Time is sacred to everyone. All time belongs to God. God's time is a time of life, so no one should appear before God with blood on one's hands. In this holy time and in every time, God says to all those who wage war, Stop: Be human, know yourselves as human, capable of love, not of killing and destruction.

The glorious Feast of Resurrection is a call to all Christians in this land to be filled with the Spirit of God, hope, and life. Do not despair. Believe in the future, no matter how harsh the present is. The final word does not belong to the people of war, but to God, and to the owners of this land. Pray and make the torment of all those who are tormented a satisfactory prayer before God. Place before God, the Creator of all, all the tortured people, the destroyed homes, the raids, the thousands of prisoners, the ruins of Gaza, the Rafah disaster, and all the cities and villages of Palestine where Palestinians are attacked, killed, and humiliated.

This sacred time is a call to Israel and to the friends of Israel to stop the war in Gaza, and not only that but also to stop the state of war that you started more than seventy years ago, and enter the paths of peace and justice, and do justice to the Palestinian people.

Your peace only begins here, in justice for the Palestinian people. No matter how powerful death is in your hands, you will not find security or peace in this land. The land belongs to its owners. Your peace means peace with the Palestinian people. Do not let this destruction and human suffering be in vain; let it be the beginning of true definitive and just peace. Stop the entire war, the war between the two people. Let there be peace, justice and equality for all.



Easter today says: "No more war in Gaza, and no more conflict between the Palestinian and Israeli people. No more enemies on God's land."

After this war, which distanced God, Glory be to Him, and shattered the essence of humanity, let God come back to His land, and let humanity come back to all. Israel does not need the death of the Palestinian people, nor their extermination or deportation, to find life, nor do the Palestinian people need more injustice to achieve the life that they have been deprived of until today. Friends of the world, churches of the world, help us to live, to stop the war in Gaza and begin justice, lasting peace, and a new life, so that this land will rest, humankind will rest, and the world will rest from an imminent global explosion. Jerusalem is a city of Redemption and Salvation for the world, not a city of world explosion and war.

Easter tells all those who humble themselves to the light of the Resurrection throughout the world, especially in the countries that are complicit in our destruction and injustice, to pray and work so that the rulers of your countries will fulfill their responsibilities and create justice and peace in our holy land.

This Feast, and every feast, and every sacred time to God, is a cry that says: **“Put an end to the destruction in Gaza, put an end to the injustices in all of Palestine, put an end to this conflict between the two peoples, and keep the Palestinian people in their land and homes.”**

Pray with us and work and be agents of peace, justice and reconciliation in this holy land.

Christ is risen! Indeed, he is risen. Happy and Holy Easter.

Personal appeal and prayer

By: Rifat Kassis,

Kairos Palestine General Secretary

We call on churches, Christian organizations and all people of conscience:

- To demand an immediate end to Israel's occupation and apartheid regime, and to insist on the Palestinians' right to self-determination in accordance with international law.
- To work with and lobby their governments to put pressure on Israel and its allies to force them to comply with the recent provisional decisions of the International Court of Justice, to stop its genocidal war immediately and take measures to protect civilians, and civilian infrastructure, including stopping targeting medical facilities and shelters.
- To request and join the countries who called upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to convene in order to put pressure on the Israeli occupation forces to fulfill their legal obligations and responsibilities towards Gaza Strip as the occupying power.
- To call for a mourning day on Good Friday to remember and hold in prayer all those who were killed since the 7th of October and calling for a respect to international laws and standards.

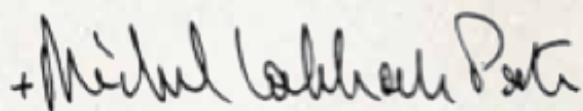
O God, in this time of darkness and despair, we lift our hearts to You in prayer. We pray for an end to the war and bloodshed in Gaza, and we ask for Your mercy to spare the lives of innocent civilians caught in this genocide war. Grant wisdom to world leaders and decision-makers to seek peaceful resolutions and to prioritize the safety, well-being and dignity of all people. Comfort those who mourn the loss of loved ones

and strengthen those who are working tirelessly for justice and those who work for providing humanitarian assistance to the people in need.

We entrust the lives of the people of Gaza into Your loving hands, trusting in Your grace and mercy to bring an end to their suffering in a new era of peace, justice, equality, free of occupation, oppression and dispossession.

In Your name, we pray, Amen.

On Kairos Palestine

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Michel Sabbah Pat". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**+ Pat. Emeritus Michel Sabbah
Chairman**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rifat Kassis". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Rifat Kassis
Secretary General**

