

State of Palestine  
Palestine Liberation Organization  
Negotiations Affairs Department

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# 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; rather, it targets individuals solely on the basis of their Palestinian and non-Jewish identity. Incitement against Christians, therefore, is part of the provocations against the Palestinian people as a whole. 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.

Incitement and acts of violence against Palestinians by Israeli ultra-nationalists are usually overlooked by the international community. 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 Christianity. Such incitement is institutionalized 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 vandalized and desecrated, and ongoing intimidation of local Christians who simply seek to worship freely and go about their daily lives. These tactics are being used by such radical groups 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 nearly [1.2%](#) of the population in the land of historic Palestine and [1%](#) of the occupied State of Palestine.

Many Palestinian Christians live abroad as a result of the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 occupation of the West Bank (WB), 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 difficult to obtain and more commonly denied entry.

### Main 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 the illegal annexation of the city. The presence of Palestinian Christians in the occupied Palestinian capital is threatened by Israeli policies, laws, and practices against Palestinians, including the revocation of ID cards, rejection of family unification applications, demolition of homes, and the forcible transfer/ displacement of the indigenous Palestinian population in favor of Israel's colonial-settler project.

The "[Absentee Property Law](#)," for example, allows Jews alone to reclaim property they owned prior to 1948. At the same time, Palestinians, including Christians, are prevented from reclaiming their properties confiscated by Israel in West Jerusalem in 1948.

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

Israel, the occupying Power, encourages targeted violence and threatens Christianity's survival in the Holy Land. Palestinians' daily reality is therefore characterized by all forms of incitement toward 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 seriously undermine the pilgrimage route to the Holy Sepulcher. 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 nearly deported in 2009 after they defended themselves against Jewish religious students who spat at them.
- A Yeshiva Student [spat on](#) Nourhan Manougian, the current Armenian Patriarch, for wearing a cross around his neck (worn by Armenian Bishops since the 17<sup>th</sup> century). While the perpetrator was not held accountable, there was an attempt to file charges against Manougian for slapping the student in defense.
- At midnight on 17 May 2021, Reverend Father Arbak Sarukhanyan, a member of the St. Hakobyants Monastic Congregation, was [physically attacked](#) by a group of young Jewish extremists while on route to perform a religious service. As a result of the incident, Fr. Arbak sustained injured and was rushed to the hospital.
- On 15 April 2023, the [Israeli occupation forces attacked](#) Christian worshipers during the Holy Fire ceremony at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Tensions arose due to Israel's limit on the number of participations to 1,800, which lead to confrontation between worshipers 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 Patriarchate by occupying the Saint John Hospice across the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a Greek Orthodox Patriarchate property,

transforming it into the largest Jewish settlement in the Old City outside the Jewish Quarter<sup>1</sup>.

- In 2005, a Zionist organization 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 neighborhood in the Old City. As settlers increasingly gain ownership of these historically significant buildings, they effectively separate 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 the plan was halted by Tamar Zandberg, the previous Minister of Environmental Protection, the re-election of Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing nationalist government 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, there have been intensive and ongoing measures at the New Gate to transform 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

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

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 celebrations such as Palm Sunday and Easter not only disrupts ceremonies but also creates an atmosphere of intimidation, deterring worshipers 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 life, 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 include 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 discreditable justification, thereby posing a threat to the principles of religious freedom.

#### **E. Attacks against Christian Properties & Churches: Price tag, hate crimes, vandalism, and others:**

## **2023**

- **16 December:** A Christian mother and daughter were killed by an Israeli sniper on the grounds of a [Catholic church \(Holy Family Parish\)](#) in Gaza City.
- **16 December:** [at least 6 Palestinians killed](#) and tens others injured in an Israeli bombardment of YMCA building sheltering about 250 thousands of displaced people.
- **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



and two bulldozers accompanied them.

- **5 November:** according to a community activist, armed settlers with 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 reached part of the church which caused panic among Christians.
- **31 October:** Israel bombarded the [Orthodox Cultural Center](#) in Tel Al Hawa neighborhood of Gaza.
- **19 October:** Israel bombed the [Greek Orthodox Church](#) (Saint Porphyrius) which is the third oldest church in the world where hundreds of displaced Palestinians were sheltering killing 18 Christians and injuring others.
- **17 October-** Israel bombed the [courtyard of Al-Ahli Baptist](#) hospital killing about 500 Palestinians.
- **Since 7 October – Aggression against Gaza:** According to [OCHA](#), at least 7 Churches were damaged.
- **2 October-** Jews spat at Church of Condemnation located at the second station of the Via Dolorosa in occupied old city of Jerusalem. ([Video](#) capturing the incident depicts orthodox Jews children and young men spitting at Christians). Itamar Ben Gvir commented on the incident in an [interview](#)” There is an ancient Jewish tradition, when we (the Jews) pass by a monastery or a priest, we spit we can agree or disagree but when we spit on the priest or the church, I don't think this expresses any violation, why do we turn this into a criminal matter?” Moreover a well-known settler named Elisha Yered wrote on his [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 are [occupying](#) Greek Orthodox land on mount Zion. A monthly occurrence has become a daily presence. One settler at least is sleeping on the premises for the past ten days. The Police forbidden the Church to close the gate of the property 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. [Video](#) evidence captures

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 1<sup>st</sup> and September 12<sup>th</sup>, 21 harassment cases were reported against Christians and their holy sites.
- **21 August** - Wadie Abu Nassar, advisor and media spokesperson of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land, 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 took to their [Facebook page](#) to share and report provocations by Jewish settlers. One wrote: “Somehow the Jews in the area began to insinuate ownership of our homes, one of our Jewish neighbors asked me (and some Armenians) to “start packing” this is very disturbing.”
- **Early August** - As per the account of a young Christian man, an incident 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, leading to the arrival of the Israeli police who subsequently detained the young Christian for a duration of three days<sup>2</sup>.
- **July** - According to Wadie Abu Nassar, 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 worshipers defending the Monastery. The latest attack occurred on 26 July, when two cars attempted to storm the Monastery at 3:30 AM, but were stopped by two guards (check [video](#) evidence of 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 cases of

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<sup>2</sup> The information presented was obtained through an interview conducted by the NAD.

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 Christians services, and one case of approaching a Christian Church citing the right to pray as Jews.<sup>3</sup>

- **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 who was present at the “Western Wall” plaza was approached by an official from the Western Wall Heritage Authority, who instructed him to [either remove or conceal his cross](#). However, the priest, declined to adhere to this request.
- **17 July** - A [Jewish settler, while passing by the Armenian Church](#), 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 before.”
- **19 June** - The Israeli military incursion against Jenin and its refugee camp left the [Catholic Church](#) in Jenin suffering massive damages.
- **18 June** - A [settler smashed the stained-glass windows](#) of Jerusalem's “Last Supper” rooms, known as the Cenacle.
- **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 Sepulcher 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 Sepulcher.
- **13 April** - A [group of settlers verbally abused](#) and spat at Christian Nuns on Via Dolorosa in occupied Jerusalem.

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<sup>3</sup> Report made available upon request.

- **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 in an attempt to sabotage the Church's content however, they were stopped and confronted by a Palestinian man.
- **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 were [attacked](#) by Israeli settlers while driving home. 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 Defense Forces (IDF) 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 [vandalized](#) 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 to Gentiles."
- **1 January** - Israeli settlers [broke into](#) the Protestant cemetery on Mount Zion in Jerusalem and destroyed more than 30 gravestones.

## 2022

- **27 December** - Members of the Elad settler organization 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 glass<sup>4</sup>.

- **6 June** - Israeli radicals [trespassed](#) into the Greek Garden on Mount Zion, a property of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, asserting unfounded ownership claims tied to King David. In anticipation of Shavuot, the Patriarchate took the precaution of securing the gates of their property. This measure was enacted due to past incidents involving radicals who trespassed, encamped on the grounds, and vandalized the site during this times<sup>5</sup>.
- **11 May** - The Israeli forces [murdered](#) the well-respected Christian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh at the entrance of Jenin refugee camp. On 13 May, during Abu Akleh's [funeral procession](#), Israeli police stormed St. Joseph's Hospital in Jerusalem, brutally attacking the pallbearers, which caused them to nearly drop her coffin.
- **15 April** - The Israeli police [brutally attacked and restricted the access](#) of worshipers 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 [vandalized the Dormition Abbey](#), which holds significant religious value, by throwing a bag of construction rubble over the Monastery's walls of the destroying the roof and some furniture.

## 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 Monastery of Tabgha.
- **2 February** - An Israeli settler [vandalized](#) the façade of the Romanian Orthodox

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<sup>4</sup> The raid primarily targeted the premises of Palestinian NGOs, notably housing human rights organizing 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 organization, a decision met with disapproval by the Office of the United Nations Higher Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR).

<sup>5</sup> 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 emphasize 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 that 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.

Church in West Jerusalem by damaging the church's gate locks and a nearby surveillance camera.

## 2020<sup>6</sup>

- **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 subsequently 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 Jimal's Monastery, a Christian cemetery located in West Jerusalem.

## 2017

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

## 2016

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<sup>6</sup> Limited records available for 2020 due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 lockdowns.

- **25 October** - Settlers [looted](#) the Church of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor in Galilee, resulting in the theft of multiple chalices, damage to icons, and a robbery of a donation box.
- **17 January** - Jewish extremists [vandalized](#) the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem.
- **9 January** - Settlers launched an [assault](#) on Beit Jimal's cemetery, causing extensive destruction to numerous graves.

## 2015

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

## 2014

- **8 May** - In a suspected 'price tag' incident, Israeli settler [vandalized](#) the Romanian Orthodox Church on Hahoma Hashlishit Street 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 [vandalized](#) the walls of the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem, a property owned by the Vatican with racist graffiti reading: "Death to Arabs and Christians."
- **31 March** - Israeli settlers [vandalized](#) the Deir Rafat Convent of the Roman Catholic church with racist graffiti reading: "Mary is a cow" and "America [is] Nazi Germany". During the attack, the settlers also punctured the tires of five nearby vehicles.
- **January** - The walls of the Notre dame of Jerusalem Center were [defaced](#) with Hebrew graffiti calling for the expulsion of Christians from Israel.

## 2013

- **6 November** - The Jerusalem municipality, accompanied by the Israeli Security 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 Christians Cemetery belonging to the Latin Patriarchate in Occupied Jerusalem. During the attacks, the settlers also slashed the tires of six cars and vandalized them, as well as the cemetery's walls with racist graffiti reading: "Revenge" and "Price Tag."
- **19 August** - The Beit Jimal Monastery was targeted in a [firebomb attack](#), causing damage with monastery's exterior. Additionally, it was also defaced with graffiti reading: "Price tag."
- **28 July** - Israeli forces [raided](#) Bethlehem's Cremisan Monastery, confining the worshipers within the monastery and inspecting their documents.
- **12 June** - An Orthodox cemetery in Jaffa was [vandalized](#) was vandalized with "price tags" and 'revenge', the vandals also spray-painted the Start of David on tombstones. Similar graffiti was discovered on a nearby residential building, and five nearby cars had their tires slashed.
- **31 May** - The Dormition Abbey was [vandalized](#) with graffiti and anti-Christian insults in Hebrew were smeared on the abbey's walls. Two nearby cars were also vandalized, and their tires were slashed. The [graffiti](#) included: "Price tag", "Christians are apes" and "Jesus is a monkey."
- **28 May** - Israeli settlers [punctured the tires](#) of a car belonging to a lawyer from the Saint Yves', a Catholic human rights organizations, in front of her residence in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem. They also vandalized and spay-painted hate slogans on the cars of her neighbors.
- **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, raising 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 tires slashed and one was vandalized with graffiti reading: “Happy Hanukkah, triumph for the Maccabees.” In Ramallah, a car was torched and ‘price tag’ 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 Abbaye de Notre-Dame de Sept-Douleurs, a monastery in Al-Latrun, was [set on fire](#), and vandalized with anti-Christian slogans reading: “Migron” and “Jesus is a Monkey”.
- **21 February** - The Narkis Street Baptist Congregation was [assaulted](#) vandalized 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 resulting in broken windows.
- **7 October** - Settlers [targeted](#) two cemeteries in Jaffa, one Christian and the other Muslim, smashing and vandalizing headstones with racist slogans reading: “Death to Arabs” and “Price tag”.

## Other Attacks

- In February 2018, the Israeli 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 took the unprecedented decision of temporarily close the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Subsequently, Israel [suspended](#) the tax collection legislation, leading to the reopening of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. However, Christian leader

remain concerned about the potential implication of such legislation in the future<sup>7</sup>.

- 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 rumors 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 restriction on their ability to worship freely or access Holy Shrines, necessitating permits from the military authority. This permit system operates selective and unpredictability, resulting in the denial of permits to many individuals. For instance, one tactic employed by the Israeli administration is issuing permits to select family members during Christian holidays, thereby preventing the entire family from fully participation in their religious celebrations<sup>8</sup>.
- Apart from the tangible aspects of occupation and the associated constraints on movement and religious freedom, Israel also utilized non-physical strategies to undermine the presence of Christians in Palestine. These non-physical tactics involve personal attacks aimed at silencing and discrediting the Palestinian Christian narrative. For example, in 2012, Israeli Ambassador, Michael Oren endeavored to obstruct a segment on the challenges faced by Christians in the WB that was planned for [CBS’s “60 Minutes” program](#).

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<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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%9CPermit-Regime%E2%80%9D-and-Israeli-Attacks-on-Palestinian-Freedom-of-Worship.pdf>

## 04. CONCLUSION

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

Since the 1948 Nakba and the occupation of the Palestinian Territory in 1967, there has been an alarming escalation of attacks against Christians and their holy sites, with an unprecedented surge in 2023. Jerusalem has become the epicenter 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 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 mechanism of control to curtail the presence of Palestinian Christians in Jerusalem by governmentalizing fear and uncertainty as a means to deter Christian worshipers and pilgrims. This unsettling trend not only jeopardizes the rich tapestry of Palestine but also threatens the sanctity of Jerusalem, a city of profound significance to all three monotheistic religions.

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 in alignment with Israel's ideology of Jewish supremacy and systemic annexation of the West Bank. Thus, it is vital to recognize 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 LAND<sup>9</sup>

## 2023

- **17 December:** The Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem in a [statement](#) strongly condemned Israel’s bombardment of churches and church related institutions and urged the International community to provide international protection to places where displaced people of Gaza sought shelter.
- **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:** [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”.

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<sup>9</sup> This is a selective and non-exhaustive list.

- **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 Israel-Palestine conflict.
- **17 October:** Statement of the World Council of Churches “outraged at news of attack on 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 in regards to the aggression on Gaza.
- **12 October:** Church leaders in 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 of radical Jews and settlers against Christians and their holy sites in Jerusalem and Haifa.
- **22 July –** The WCC General Secretary, Jerry Pillary, 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 issued a [statement](#) regarding the Holy Light Ceremony in response to the statement by the Israeli police.
- **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 Sepulcher.
- **12 April** - The WCC issued a [statement](#) regarding Israeli restrictions during Easter and Holy Fire Saturday, advocating for “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, work to 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](#) regarding the escalating violence in Jerusalem and emphasized 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, categorizing 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](#) expressing its strong condemnation of the grave attacks on Protestant cemetery in Mount Zion.

## 2022

- **28 December** - The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate issued a [statement](#) concerning 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 issued by the various 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 characterized 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 objecting was to safeguard the cultural and religious heritage of the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem, particule in the face of incidents involving settler violence.
- **1 September** - H.B. Theophilos III, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Father Francesco Patton, the Custos of the Holy Land, jointly signed a letter registering their objection to the Municipality’s arrangement of what they considered to be “irrelevant” activities taking place at a significant entrance to the Christian Quarter. This entrance serves as a route leading to their monastic facilities, religious establishments, and education institutions. Furthermore, they emphasized that as the exclusive owners of the properties situated along this street, no prior authorization or consent was sought or obtained for the hosting of such events.<sup>10</sup>

## Prior to 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 in compliance with international law and UN resolutions.
- **25 February 2018** - In a [joint statement](#), the leaders of the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian churches disclosed the closure of the Church of Holy Sepulcher in protest of 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

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<sup>10</sup> A leaked unpublished letter shared with NAD.



that abrupt alterations could lead to increased violence and suffering in the city. The letter stressed Jerusalem's significant as a city of peace for all its inhabitants and called for a political process to facilitate a 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 emphasizing 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, recognizing its sacredness the three monotheistic religions. It emphasized 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 objecting 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 the historical and religious significance of Jerusalem to Christians, Muslims and Jews.

## INDEX 2: OTHER STATEMENTS – PALESTINIAN CHRISTIANS IN THE MEDIA, 2021-2023

### 2023

- **16 December:** [Statement](#) by the Higher Presidential Committee for Churches Affairs on 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 Higher 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 Higher 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:** [Report](#) by the Higher Presidential Committee on Churches Affairs “Israeli violations against Christians in Palestine 2023”.
- **4 October:** “The Higher 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 Presidency 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** - The Ha'aretz 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](#) expressing Israel's President, Isaac Herzog's, condemnation of the growing attacks against Christian 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** - In an [interview](#) with Israeli journalist Yossi Eli, published by La Croix, 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) newspaper published an [article](#) titled “Holy Land Christians Say Attacks Rising in Far-Right Israel.”
- **12 April** - The Higher Presidential Committee of Churches Affairs issued a [statement](#) advocating against Israel's restriction during Holy Fire Saturday.
- **12 April** - The Ha'artez newspaper published an [article](#) titled “‘Holy Fire’ Celebrations ‘Unreasonably Restricted’ by Israeli Police, Jerusalem Church

says.”

- **12 April** - The Higher Presidential Committee for the Follow-up of Church Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) calling on Palestinian Christians to participate in large numbers in the Holy Light activist 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** - The Ha’aretz 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 Higher Presidential Committee of Churches Affairs released a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settler attacks on the Church of Gethsemane.
- **17 March** - The Towards Freedom newspaper published an [article](#) titled “Jerusalem’s Christians Attribute Rise in Violence to Israel’s New Government.”
- **2 February** - The Higher Presidential Committee of Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settler attacks against the Church of Condemnation.
- **29 January** - The Higher Presidential Committee of 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 Higher Presidential Committee of 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 Higher Presidential Committee of Churches Affairs in Palestine issued a [statement](#) condemning Israeli settler 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 released a [statement](#) urging the protection of the status quo and holy sites in occupied Jerusalem following the takeover of the Greek Patriarchate property in Silwan.
- **30 December** - The Higher Presidential Committee of 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 Higher Presidential Committee of Churches 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, President of the Higher Presidential Committee of Churches Affairs, [commends](#) the national position of the Presbyterian Church 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 in relation to his visit to Bethlehem.
- **12 June** - The Churches for Middle East Peace issued a [statement](#) expressing disappointment at Israel's court ruling that lead to the expropriation 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 the decision of Israel's Supreme Court 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](#) aimed at preserving 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 organizations have issued numerous statements and appeals concerning the challenges faced by 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 Custos of the Holy land submitted an [appeal](#) to the Israeli President regarding restrictions on Christian access to the Holy Sepulcher 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 Legislature, 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 organizations signed a strongly worded [statement](#) denouncing the longstanding illegal lease of the historical Armenian Garden known as the Cows' Garden.