



Committee on International Justice and Peace

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November 20, 2014

The Honorable Ron Dermer
Ambassador of Israel to the United States
Embassy of Israel
3524 International Drive, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

As Chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I write convey our sincere condolences to Your Excellency and to the people of Israel at this difficult time. The news of the terrible murders and malicious injuring of worshippers at prayer in the synagogue in Har Nof, Jerusalem is intolerable and inexcusable. Innocent civilians should never be the direct targets of violent attacks and houses of worship ought to be respected as sacred sanctuaries.

At this time of acute loss I make my own the sentiments expressed by the Council of the Religious Institutions of the Holy Land on behalf of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, The Heads of the Local Churches of the Holy Land and the Courts of Sharia Law in the Palestinian Authority: "Such murderous deeds especially in a house of worship are the ultimate abuse of religion. We call on all religious political and civic leaders to do their utmost to prevent the local political conflict from being turned into a religious war the consequences of which will be disastrous for all."

Please accept our most sincere condolences at this time of mourning.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Oscar Cantú
Bishop of Las Cruces
Chair, Committee on International Justice and Peace
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops