



## Committee on International Justice and Peace

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April 24, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
United States Department of State  
2100 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I write to express our deep concern over the President's March 25 *Proclamation on Recognizing the Golan Heights as Part of the State of Israel* and the dangerous precedent it sets.

The Catholic Church has long been committed to peace in the Holy Land which requires terms of peace to be ultimately negotiated between Israel and her Arab neighbors. The two-state solution (a secure Israel and a contiguous and viable Palestinian state) continues to be the aspiration and best hope for a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The difficult work of peace and security requires mutual agreement among disputing parties, not unilateral action and abrogation of the norms of established international law, most notably UN Resolutions 497 and 242 in this case. Any security assurances desired for Israel by this unprecedented action are far overshadowed by the resulting undermining of norms by which the U.S. government, or any government, can challenge other nations' future seizure of territory in the Holy Land or elsewhere. This will sharpen disputes and incite belligerence, rather than promote amicable and lasting peace that can ultimately only be arrived at through dialogue and negotiation.

The fate of the two-state solution and the need to ease suffering and establish lasting peace for all people of the Holy Land -- Jews, Christians and Muslims alike -- are imperiled by this proclamation. My sentiments and prayers echo those of Pope Francis who said in May of last year, "I am very worried and saddened by the escalation of tensions in the Holy Land and in the Middle East, and for the spiral of violence that increasingly moves away from the path of peace, dialogue and negotiations...I invite all the parties involved and the international community to renew their commitment so that dialogue, justice and peace prevail."

Thank you for your receiving these concerns and be assured of my prayers for a true, lasting, and durable peace in the Holy Land.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio  
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA  
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace