

# Churches for Middle East Peace



110 Maryland Avenue NE, #311 • Washington, D.C. 20002 • (202)543-1222 • Fax: (202)543-5025 • info@cmep.org • www.cmep.org

James Fine, Chair of the Board  
Amb. (ret.) Warren Clark, Executive Director  
Amanda Rios, Deputy Director  
Carolyn Danckaert, Field Director

Alliance of Baptists

American Friends Service Committee

Antiochian Orthodox Christian  
Archdiocese of North America

Armenian Orthodox Church

Catholic Conference of Major  
Superiors of Men's Institutes

Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
Common Global Ministries Board

Church of the Brethren

Church World Service

Episcopal Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church  
in America

Franciscan Friars (OFM)  
English Speaking Conference,  
JPIC Council

Friends Committee on National  
Legislation

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese  
of America

Maryknoll Missioners

Mennonite Central Committee

Moravian Church in America

National Council of Churches

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Reformed Church in America

Unitarian Universalist Association

United Church of Christ  
Common Global Ministries Board

United Methodist Church  
General Board of Church and Society  
General Board of Global Ministries:  
Women's Division

August 7, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Secretary of State  
United States Department of State  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary,

We are writing to express our grave concern about the eviction of 50 Palestinians from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah section of East Jerusalem in the early morning hours of August 2, 2009. Witnesses reported that almost immediately Israeli settlers moved into the houses to replace the Palestinians.

The houses in question were built in the 1950s during the period of Jordanian administration of East Jerusalem. While the legal issues in the case are disputed, it is clear that carrying out this eviction order at this time is provocative. We thank you and deeply appreciate your statement of August 3 that "eviction of families...in East Jerusalem is not in keeping with Israeli obligations."

This population substitution is clearly designed to continue efforts to expand Israeli presence and control over Palestinian areas of East Jerusalem. This action took place in the sensitive Sheikh Jarrah section of East Jerusalem close to the 1949 Armistice Line or Green Line. A home eviction order at this time and in this place is not a mere matter of local law enforcement, but raises significant international political issues. It contradicts terms of the Road Map brokered by the United States and agreed to by both Israeli and Palestinian representatives to refrain from activities that could undermine progress towards a peace agreement. It also undercuts U.S. efforts to create an environment for starting talks for a comprehensive peace agreement and is therefore harmful to both the Palestinians and Israelis hopes for peace.

For these reasons a U.S. response that is limited to official protests is not sufficient. We urge the Department of State to insist on the immediate reversal of this ill-considered eviction and on the restoration of these houses to their former residents.

Yours most sincerely,

*Continued on page 2*

**Very Rev. Thomas Cassidy, SCJ.**  
President  
Conference of Major Superiors of Men's  
Institutes

**Paula Clayton Dempsey**  
Minister for Partnership Relations  
Alliance of Baptists

**Marie Dennis**  
Director  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

**Wes Granberg-Michaelson**  
General Secretary  
Reformed Church in America

**The Rev. Mark S. Hanson**  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**Bishop Howard J. Hubbard**  
Chairman  
Committee on International Justice and Peace  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

**The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori**  
Presiding Bishop  
The Episcopal Church

**Margaret Mary Kimmins, OSF**  
President  
Franciscan Action Network

**Antonios Kireopoulos**  
Senior Program Director for Faith and Order  
and Interfaith Relations  
National Council of Churches

**Rachelle Lyndaker Schlabach**  
Director  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington  
Office

**Rev. John L. McCullough**  
Executive Director and CEO  
Church World Service

**Mary Ellen McNish**  
General Secretary  
American Friends Service Committee

**Gregory V. Palmer**  
President  
United Methodist Council of Bishops

**Rev. Grady Parsons**  
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church, (USA)

**John H. Thomas**  
General Minister and President  
United Church of Christ

**Joe Volk**  
Executive Secretary  
Friends Committee on National Legislation

**Sharon E. Watkins**  
General Minister and President  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the  
United States and Canada

**Jay A. Wittmeyer**  
Executive Director  
Church of the Brethren, Global Mission Partners