

EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Nakba Day, 2018

Our dear brothers and sisters in South Africa,

In the name of Kairos Palestine and in the name of the Palestinian people we salute you for your solidarity with us and the means you are bravely taking to show your support for our cause. You as a nation - among all people - know firsthand the meaning of oppression, racism, discrimination and apartheid. You have witnessed and experienced similar violations to the ones we go through on daily basis and you are not a stranger to the brutal policies imposed upon us by the Israeli occupation. When you stand in solidarity with our cause, you not only show us Palestinians that we are not alone in our struggle; rather you show the whole world that you bear witness to our oppression and that you reject it. We pray that your courage will serve as a beacon of light that shines throughout the rest of the world uniting the free and the conscious amongst us under the umbrella of fighting for justice, freedom and self-determination.

We thank you all and God bless you.

Rifat Kassis
Coordinator, Kairos Palestine

Dear sisters and brothers,

Thank you for this important initiative. Tomorrow a diverse group of organisations, including Kairos Sabeel Netherlands will hold a major public event in view of this year's Nakba day. In many ways we are inspired by our friends, fellow Christians and many others, from Palestine, but also by the witness of others, including those that have fought apartheid in South Africa and continue to do so. One always feels it is not enough, but it is important to persevere.

Jan van der Kolk
Kairos Sabeel Netherlands

Dear Stiaan,

I write to assure you of our support for your initiative, especially for us living on the continent of Africa, where religious manipulation and political instability continues to rob us of real understanding of injustice to our brothers and sisters in Palestine. We see our joint struggle as a still voice that will soon be heard louder and clearer. Peace be with you.

Very Rev. Kolade Fadahunsi

Member, Kairos Foundation of Nigeria
Director, Institute of Church and Society, Nigeria

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We send our thanks and appreciation to you as South Africans for continuing to provide spiritual and active leadership for our growing global movement. Your call to Christians, Jews, Muslims and all South Africans reaches beyond your borders to the entire global community of people standing, their feet firmly planted, in support of the struggle against tyranny and racism. We are blessed to join you, in the words of the Benedictine prayer quoted in your statement, as fools of God in the sure belief that we can make a difference in the world! Abundant blessings to you in your work from the broad Kairos USA community.

Mark Braverman
Executive Director, Kairos USA

Dear Stiaan:

Blessings from Nazareth! I want to thank you for your support for justice and peace. I have one prayer that I would like to share. This prayer is taken from my recent book "Praying through the Psalms" which includes 150 contextual Palestinian prayers, one for each psalm.

Prayer from Psalm 82

O Lord! You want justice and want us to walk in its footsteps (v. 2). You care for the orphan, the poor, and the widowed (v. 3). Empower me to become an eye for the blind and a tear for those who sit in darkness. Turn me into legs for the crippled and for those who suffer immobility. Enable me to be a mother for the poor and for orphans. Give me the strength to be a voice for the mute and for those whose tongues have been silenced. I desire to be a home for a

homeless nation. I want to be a comforting smile during a season of sadness, a moment of rest in an eternity of torture. May I become a garment of mercy for the helpless.

My world has become an island of the rich surrounded by a sea of the poor. Half the people on earth live below the poverty line; many are living on less than a dollar a day. They lack water, homes, and education. Without the eye of justice, we don't see their plight; without the ear of mercy, we don't hear their voice. Should we enjoy our island of richness and ignore the waves crashing on our beach, waves full of pain, weakness, and poverty? Our neighbours are sinking in a sea of sorrows. They want justice and search for it.

"Who is my neighbour?" the church continues to ask. But I plead for justice and seek to walk in it. O God, rise up and transform your church to become a seeker of justice who walks in its path (v. 8). Help me today to wake up from the drunken seeking of riches so that I can start showing mercy to the weak, the orphan, the widow, the handicapped, the refugee, and the unemployed. Help me to seek justice for poor nations, for their sons and daughters

Sincerely,

Rev. Professor Yohanna Katanacho, Ph.D.
Nazareth Evangelical College - Academic Dean
Bethlehem Bible College - Consultant and Professor of Biblical Studies

Dear Stiaan,

Thanks for your mail. I just want to keep you informed a group of concerned Christian leaders are now initiating a process of developing Kairos Sri Lanka document and mobilising support of the Christian community in Sri Lanka to stand with the struggle of our brothers and sisters in Palestine. At the same time, the Palestine Solidarity groups together with the Embassy of State of Palestine in Sri Lanka are organising few public events on 14th May to mark the Palestine Day. They will be very happy to see the solidarity from different parts of the world.

In response to your request here is our prayer;

"HEAVENLY FATHER, you are the Lord of oppressed. We hear your voice and it's always for the struggle of oppressed and the victims.

At the crucial moment, we cry for our brothers and sisters in Palestine who are subjected to unbearable suffering and oppression.

Give them the strength and courage to stand on what they believe right and just.

Amen"

Aruna Shantha Nonis
Chief Coordinator, *Born To Win Relationships Training Institute* and member of YMCA of Pamunugama, Sri Lanka.

Dear Stiaan and the activists in South Africa,

From Bremen/Germany and the Kairos Palestine group we send our best wishes for your activities planned for Nakba Day. May God bless your work and open hearts and minds of the people! It is very encouraging that and how you are active for a just peace in Palestine/Israel.

In Bremen since eight years we hold every Saturday 11:30 to 12:30 a one hour vigil for a just peace in Palestine/Israel in front of the main cathedral in the city centre.

In Germany the Israel Lobby is very active and sadly quite successful: Each criticism of Israel's politics is labelled anti-Semitic. Our media reports that anti-Semitism in Germany is growing, but this is not a true reflection of what is happening! In fact, in one of our posters we quote a statement of Avi Primor, Ambassador of Israel in Germany, 1993 – 1999 to the Bremen House of Parliament on "Israel Day" 2015: "It is not anti-Semitism that is increasing, but the acceptance of Israel's policies that is shrinking!"

Best wishes and God's blessing,
Hildegard Lenz
Kairos Group of Bremen, Germany

Dear Stiaan,

Thank you so much for doing this great solidarity work. Palestinians have learnt so much from your experience struggling against a racist system of expropriation, pauperization, and exclusion.

Warm regards and best wishes for a successful event.

Philip Farah
Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace