

Prayer Petitions: 24 October 2016
ACT PALESTINE FORUM
PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
24TH of every month

Every day in the month ahead, we continue to pray with and for our sisters and brothers in Palestine and Israel who have called for an ecumenical prayer vigil across the globe on the 24th of every month.

We are called to pray for an end to hostilities and bloodshed, for healing and reconciliation, and for a just and lasting peace that brings safety and development to all Palestinians and Israelis.

APF encourages its friends and partners to visit the [APF website](#) and [APF Facebook](#) page often to find, and also contribute, updates, photos, stories, advocacy ideas, and special prayers.

A special thanks to Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Resource Center for contributing to this month's prayers.

ACT Palestine Forum Prayers

24 October 2016

Prayer Focus: Forcible Transfer

Issues of land and housing continue to present some of the most pressing challenges of the Israeli Occupation as a whole. The forcible transfer of Palestinians throughout the occupied Palestinian territories has seen a dramatic increase in the year 2016 and populations in the West Bank, particularly Bedouin communities, are especially vulnerable. These communities are at risk because Israeli practices have created a coercive environment that puts pressure on them to move, mainly through the unavailability of building permits, which are almost impossible to acquire. As of August 2016, 786 Palestinian-owned structures had been demolished in 2016, cumulatively displacing 1,197 people, 558 of whom are children. Over 200 of the demolished structures were provided as humanitarian relief (source: UNOCHA).

The forcible transfer of protected persons from their normal place of residence is prohibited under Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which also forbids deportations outside an occupied territory. The UN Secretary General has pointed out that the relocation of communities against their will, including as a result of the creation of a coercive environment, may amount to individual and mass forcible transfer. These transfers are often on land that has been designated for settlement expansion and the proposed relocation areas are inadequate to support the traditional herding and grazing lifestyle of the Bedouin, undermining both their livelihood and their culture.

Scripture Isaiah 58:6-7

⁶“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?

⁷Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

This Scripture passage reminds us of God’s mission to restore justice and our participation in that mission. Please join us in praying for the courage to recognize and name the injustices we see in Palestine and Israel and for the strength to continue to seek peace through justice. We pray for those whose humanity goes unrecognized and whose dignity is stripped by unjust policies.

PRAYER

Let us pray for justice and righteousness for all of God’s creation:

(I. leader, II. congregation)

I. God, thank you for the miracle that we can meet in this fragmented world.

II. Thank you for the love in the midst of a world of hatred.

I. Thank you for reconciliation in the midst of a world of hatred.

II. Thank you for the light in the midst of a world of darkness.

I. Now we ask you, God, glorify your name through us.

II. Thank you for your Son who is the light of the world.

I. Call us to you and send us as lights in the world.

II. God, let the miracle happen.

Holy God, where ignorance, self-love, and insensitivity have fractured life in the community,
Give us your light, O God of love.

Where injustice and oppression have broken the spirit of your peoples, especially in Palestine and Israel, **Give us your light, O God who frees.**

Where hunger and poverty, illness and death have made life an unbearable burden, especially in Gaza, among the Bedouin, and in refugee camps, **Give us your light, O God of grace.**

Where suspicion and hatred, conflict and war have challenged your goodness, especially in Palestine and Israel, and in many other places in our world, **Give us your light, O God of peace.**

Where terror and extremism seek power and control, and where fear poisons human relationships, especially in Europe and the Middle East, **Give us a perfect love which casts out fear, O God.**

Eternal God, remove the blindness of nations and people so that they may walk in the light of love. Remove the ignorance and stubbornness of nations and peoples so that they may drink from the fountains of your goodness. Receive these prayers in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

(based on a prayer by Per Harling, from the WCC publication “Worshipping Ecumenically”, 1995)

For more information on Forcible Transfers, check out these articles and resources:

[UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – occupied Palestinian Territories](#)

[OCHA – Who is at risk of forcible transfer?](#)

Ma’an News -[Forcible transfer of Bedouin communities](#)

[JPost – Israel to transfer 46 West Bank Bedouin communities](#)

[Diakonia – Displacement and Forcible Transfer](#)