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PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION OF ISRAEL-PALESTINE

The LWF Council, meeting in Geneva, Switzerland from 13 to 18 June 2019, under the theme “Because we know God’s voice” (John 10:4), deliberated and adopted the following public statement:

As Christians called to “pursue what makes for peace and for mutual edifications.” Romans 14:19, we issue the following statement.

The Council expresses its disapproval of unilateral measures taken in relation to Jerusalem as well as increased demolitions of homes and other structures and the expansion of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). These actions undermine prospects for a two-state solution. The Council remains deeply concerned about humanitarian funding cuts that have restricted access to health care, food and clean water prompting wide-spread health concerns, especially in Gaza.

In the midst of the current bleak prospects for peace with justice, the Council reiterates its accompaniment to the LWF member church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), as it brings a message and witness of hope to the people.

The Council also wishes to lift up the ministry of the LWF World Service Country Program on the Mount of Olives, including the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) and the Vocational Training Program (VTP) which provides an important witness and essential services to the Palestinian people and expresses the solidarity of the global communion of churches.

The Council reiterates its position on a two-state solution, following the negotiated resolution of all final status issues and the end of the occupation, the establishment of an independent and viable Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel, and peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. Equally, the Council reiterates its position on Jerusalem, one city shared by two peoples and three religions.

The council calls upon its member churches:

- To stand in solidarity and prayers with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL).
- To continue supporting the vital ministry of the LWF World Service Country Program, including the Augusta Victoria Hospital and the Vocational Training Program.
- To advocate at key moments for a negotiated two-state solution supported by the international community and based on international humanitarian and human rights law and relevant UN resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council.

