



A worldwide fellowship of churches seeking unity, a common witness and Christian service

- [Events](#)
- [News](#)
 - [Churches call for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Gaza](#)
- [News in other languages](#)
- [Sign up for WCC press list](#)

Churches call for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Gaza

22 July 2014

Expressing grave concern over the escalation of military operations in Gaza, the World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said, “Hostilities must cease. Israel, Palestine and the surrounding region must be offered the hope of peace: a peace based in justice, a lasting peace that may lead toward reconciliation”.

In an official statement from the WCC issued on 22 July, Tveit expressed deep sadness over the “human devastation on every side, and the disproportionately high number of Palestinian civilian casualties, including women and children”.

On behalf of the 345 member churches of the WCC, Tveit appealed to “all parties to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law” which condemn and prohibit all kinds of indiscriminate and disproportionate killing of civilians.

Tveit shared the WCC’s call for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Gaza. He urged lifting of restrictions on the movement of persons and goods in and out of the Gaza Strip so that urgent humanitarian needs can be dealt with.

In the statement, WCC also called for the resumption of direct peace talks to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable peace based upon a two-state solution along internationally recognized borders.

Tveit said that the “latest resórt to armed conflict – and the consequent intolerable suffering inflicted on families and communities – can do nothing to promote a just and sustainable peace for Israelis and Palestinians”.

He added that “peace in Israel and Palestine will come only through the restoration of compassion between human beings, through seeking together common paths towards justice and peace, and through a genuine commitment to creating the basis for future generations of Israelis and Palestinians to live side-by-side in peace.”

[Read full text of the WCC general secretary’s statement](#)



Gaza City, 18 July. Photo: Mohammed Badarin