Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
Living Out God's Grace & Unconditional Love

May 14, 2026

Dear Honourable Minister Anand,

On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), we are writing to express our deepest concern regarding the ongoing violence against Palestinians in the West Bank.

Even after the declaration of a ceasefire in October 2025, the use of weapons has not ceased. Hundreds of people in Gaza and the West Bank have been killed or suffered grievous injury. Many have experienced assault against their person, property and freedoms. Palestinian land continues to be seized for additional settlements, which are illegal according to international law.

In Taybeh, the last remaining wholly Christian town in the occupied West Bank, people have faced intimidation and attacks, with the intent of driving them off their land. These actions are also illegal under international law.

The ELCIC stands in solidarity with the people of Taybeh and condemns the attacks on Palestinian Christians – their churches, towns and land. We continue to pray and advocate for a just peace for all people in the Holy Land.

On March 30, Israel's Knesset passed a law imposing the death penalty for Palestinian detainees. This discriminatory law is worded to apply exclusively to Palestinians sentenced at an Israeli military court's discretion. The military courts responsible for enforcing this law, where only Palestinians are tried, are notorious for disregarding due process. These courts have an approximately 96 percent conviction rate that relies on confession obtained under duress and torture.

The United Nations high commissioner for human rights says the application of this law would constitute a war crime. This further demonstrates the oppression and injustice happening in the West Bank. The ELCIC condemns the imposition of the death penalty for Palestinian detainees.

We urge the Government of Canada to lead the global community in an ethical and just response to the cycle of deadly violence. We ask you to:

400-185 Carlton Street, Winnipeg, MB R3C 3J1
PHONE: 204-984-9150 / 888-786-6707 WEB: info@elcic.ca

*The ELCIC acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples.*

Apply diplomatic pressure on the occupying authorities to halt settler actions and prevent them from entering or grazing in Taybeh's lands, and to call for immediate and transparent investigation into all incidents of harassment and violence.

Communicate Canada's moral outrage at the imposition of the death penalty for Palestinian detainees.

End all loopholes in Canadian legislation that allow arms to be shipped to the region via a third party.

Our prayers and actions for justice are always intertwined, and so we join in prayer with the people of Taybeh who have said, "Yet we remain steadfast in our shared faith and hope that truth and justice will ultimately prevail."

In Christ Jesus,



Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer
*National Bishop, ELCIC*



Rev. Dr. Ali Tote
*Bishop of the Saskatchewan Synod*



Rev. Kathy Martin
*Bishop of the British Columbia Synod*



Rev. Jason Zinko
*Bishop of the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod*



Rev. Patricia Schmermund
*Bishop of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories*



Rev. Carla Blakley
*Bishop of the Eastern Synod*