

*The Evangelical Lutheran Church  
in Jordan and the Holy Land*



الكنيسة الإنجيلية اللوثرية  
في الأردن والأراضي المقدسة

Statement on the increased violence in East Jerusalem

Bishop Sani Ibrahim Azar

Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan & the Holy Land

Jerusalem 8/5/2021

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) is deeply concerned by the tension and increased violence in East Jerusalem and at the Haram al-Sharif. This wave of violence has left hundreds of Palestinian civilians wounded. We are especially dismayed by the volatile situation in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, where dozens of Palestinians are being evicted from their family homes by Israeli settlers.

This provocation of the Palestinian people by the Israeli army and by settlers, especially during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, is completely unacceptable. These actions are in violation of the Status Quo agreement, which guarantees the three religions, and two people access to their holy sites during religious celebrations. In the last weeks, we have already seen violations of this agreement when Christians were harassed and denied access to the Church of the Resurrection for the Holy Fire and Easter celebration.

Furthermore, the impending evictions in Sheikh Jarrah are illegal under international law. This move by right-wing Israeli settlers only serves to fuel tensions and increase hatred among Israelis and Palestinians.

As a religious leader in the Holy City of Jerusalem, I urge all parties involved to respect the Status Quo, to act responsibly and calmly, and to preserve human life at all costs. We continue to pray and advocate for reconciliation and a just peace for Jerusalem and all its residents—Christian, Jewish, and Muslim, Palestinian and Israeli.

**Bishop Sani-Ibrahim Azar**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan & the Holy Land