



The Archbishops and Primates of Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

1 September 2025

Archbishops' Statement Regarding the Holy Land

E mihi ana ki te tangata, e tangi ana ki te whenua. Tē taea ngā tapuwae o nanahi, o naiane te ūkui. No reira, kia ngawari te takahi i te mata o te whenua. E ngā iwi o te whenua, o te ao, kia mau te rongo, he mea paiheretia nā te rangimārie.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Israel and Palestine conflict has reached a grave tipping point, with famine now gripping Gaza. As Christians, we are called to act with moral clarity, to uphold the mana and tapu of every life, and to press for change that ensures food and medicine reach those in need, while urging all those with power to pursue peace for the region.

Over a hundred organisations [plead](https://www.oxfam.org.nz/news-media/media-releases/more-than-100-organisations-are-sounding-the-alarm-to-allow-lifesaving-aid-into-gaza/)¹: let lifesaving aid into Gaza. More than half a million-face famine, one in three go days without food, twelve thousand children were malnourished in July, and food prices have risen eightyfold. Without action to end Israel's restriction of aid into Gaza, which international law requires to flow, mass starvation is certain.

All are suffering on both sides of this conflict. As the anniversary of 7 October 2023 draws near, the present injustice must be seen in the light of a much longer history of fear, trauma, and violence.

We deplore this inhumanity and cry out for the vulnerable and the oppressed. Each day, innocent people carry a burden they did not choose, yet they too are embraced within God's love and deserving of justice and peace.

We call on Israel to let urgent aid into Gaza and to agree to a ceasefire. We also call on Hamas to release the 20 remaining Israeli hostages, taken during the October 2023 attack, and to return them swiftly to their loved ones in Israel, and to agree to a ceasefire. Both must act with urgency to uphold the dignity of every human life.

As Anglicans, we are known for our openness and thoughtfulness, and we commit ourselves to listening, learning, and honouring the diverse and complex experiences and perspectives of the region.

Our immediate calls to action are two-fold:

For the government of Aotearoa New Zealand

We pray that more of our MPs will have the moral courage to speak out for justice in the knowledge that to do so is not to express a partisan point of view but is an expression of care for our common humanity.

¹ <https://www.oxfam.org.nz/news-media/media-releases/more-than-100-organisations-are-sounding-the-alarm-to-allow-lifesaving-aid-into-gaza/>

We urge our government to use all the diplomatic mechanisms at its disposal to call for:

- The immediate unconditional, safe, protected and ongoing entry of aid – food, water and medical supplies - into occupied areas
- The return of all hostages
- The cessation of illegal settlement in Occupied Palestinian Territories
- An immediate and long-lasting ceasefire of all hostilities
- The creation of a two-state solution to effect lasting peace for the region
- The unimpeded support for international accountability mechanisms to conduct independent investigations into all war crimes and crimes against humanity.

For Christians in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

- *Will you fast and pray?* We ask for your continued and fervent prayer for this situation.
- *Will you inform yourselves?* We commend to you the work of Archbishop Hosam Nouam, the Archbishop of Jerusalem, in providing a Christian perspective on the conflict.
- *Will you do everything you can as best aligns with your faith to exercise your democratic right?* We know not everyone shares the same opinion, but however you stand, one of the simplest ways you can express your voice is to write to your local MP. They are your elected representative.
- *Will you support with your resources?* Please continue to support humanitarian aid appeals.²

In our last statement, we used the words of Psalm 130. We reiterate these again now, asking God to be present in his mercy. We pray them over the peoples of the Holy Land and over all those in power to bring peace, and over the violence in our own hearts:

‘Out of the depths I cry to you O Lord; hear my voice. O let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading.’

In Christ



Archbishop Don Tamihere



Archbishop Justin Duckworth



Archbishop Sione Ulu'ilakepa

Archbishops and Senior Primates of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

² Such as Anglican Missions *Hope for the Holy Land Appeal*: anglicanmissions.org.nz/humanitarian-emergencies/holy-land/