

Jerusalem, March 04th, 2021

Palestinian Christians Support

The Rev. Frank Chikane the Moderator of the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs

*Blessed are the peacemakers,
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.
Mathew 5: 9-11*

We give thanks for and come alongside our Christian brother, Frank Chikane, who suffered many years for his courageous anti-apartheid work in South Africa. Now, our friend is unjustly criticized for his solidarity with Palestinians suffering under the apartheid State of Israel.

Rev. Chikane has been the target of a vicious smear campaign that leveled the charge of anti-semitism, a false attack familiar to Palestinians and those around the world who speak out against the racist laws and practices of Israel and value the dignity and human rights of Palestinians.

Rev. Chikane had shared his praise for the film, *The People's Patriarch*. The film celebrates the life of retired Patriarch Emeritus Michel Sabbah, a defender of human rights and a steadfast advocate of nonviolent resistance to Israel's illegal occupation. Rev. Chikane referenced the text of a Hebrew prophet who spoke on God's behalf to insist that God would hold a people accountable for their actions. Rev. Chikane's statement was taken out of context and misrepresented as a violent threat against Jews.

The original charge—amplified by pro-Israel media—was made by the spokesperson for a Christian Zionist organization, the purposes of which organization are to offer unquestioned support for the Israeli project of to vilify the character and motives of any who seek a just end to Israel's occupation. Many of us have been the subject of this person's false accusations and distortions of our positions.

In an [interview](#) on the South African network, Salaamedia, Rev. Chikane responded to the charges—an opportunity he was not given by his accuser. We were not surprised to hear his insistence that ours is not a tribal God, but one who loves all people, that “through Jesus the wall of separation has come down.” In criticizing Christian Zionism, Rev. Chikane joined us by insisting that it justifies one side against another, “turning God into a tribal God.”

We admire Rev. Chikane who will not be moved by unjust criticism. And we join him when, in the interview, he said, “This is where I stand. No amount of theology, no amount of justification of biblical texts will make me

believe that our God will support the disregard of the existence of people on earth who are made in God's image."

As expressed in [A Moment of Truth](#), the Kairos Palestine document inspired by the witness of our South African siblings,

"We believe in God, good and just. We believe that God's goodness will finally triumph over the evil of hate and of death that still persist in our land. We will see here "a new land" and "a new human being", capable of rising up in the spirit to love each one of his or her brothers and sisters."

This Statement is by Kairos Palestine, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Christ at the Checkpoint, East Jerusalem YMCA, YWCA of Palestine, The Joint Advocacy Initiative, and Film Director and Producer of "The people's Patriarch" film.