

Statement Concerning Gaza, Israel, The West Bank and East Jerusalem – July 2025

There are times when the Church is called to speak — to name suffering, to call out injustice, and to affirm the value and dignity of all people. We acknowledge that, as Baptists, we have not always found it easy to speak clearly in the face of this crisis, and our collective voice has often been quieter than the moment has required. Today, we add our voice to those speaking out, seeking to name the injustices plainly evident in Gaza, Israel and the Palestinian Territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

We recognise that these injustices did not begin on the 7th October 2023, but are part of a much longer history of fear, trauma and violence across the region. We commit ourselves to ongoing listening to those most impacted, acknowledging diverse experiences and perspectives. We refuse, however, to be paralysed by complexity, so we will endeavour to speak and act for peace and justice in the way all those who follow Jesus must.

We affirm the recent statement from the [Central Committee of the World Council of Churches](#) (WCC), of which the Baptist Union of Great Britain is a member, calling to ‘End Apartheid, Occupation, and Impunity in Palestine and Israel’. We too recognize the ‘clear distinction between the Jewish people, our siblings in faith, and the acts of the Government of Israel,’ and echo the commitment of the WCC as it ‘stands against any kind of racism, including antisemitism, anti-Arab racism, and islamophobia’.

We unequivocally condemn the attack carried out by Hamas in Israel on the 7th October 2023. There is no defence for killing, maiming and kidnapping innocent civilians. We are deeply troubled by the stories of the released hostages, who have described their ordeals of facing threats and beatings, and living with little food in appalling conditions. It is right that the perpetrators of all these crimes should be held accountable. Our tears, our thoughts and our prayers remain with the friends and families of the 1200 people that were killed in the 7th October attacks, with those who now know their kidnapped friends and relatives to have died or been killed, and with those who live in hope they may yet be reunited with their loved ones.

While acknowledging the trauma of the 7th October attacks, the subsequent Israeli military response in Gaza has exponentially escalated civilian suffering. Reports of indiscriminate bombing, murder, sexual violence, torture, forcible transfer, the deliberate blockade of food, water, medical aid, and fuel, the targeting of civilian infrastructure including hospitals, churches, clinics and schools, and the deliberate killing of medical professionals and journalists, signify a catastrophe beyond comprehension.

We are also deeply alarmed by the Israeli Government’s increasing tactics of property destruction, forced displacement, and the development of further settlements, widely considered illegal under international law, in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

We are compelled therefore, to call on all governments with influence to help bring about an immediate end to these atrocities. Specifically, we call for:

- An immediate and permanent bilateral ceasefire in Gaza.
- The release of all hostages.
- Unconditional access for humanitarian aid to enter the whole of Gaza, including immediate access to water, food, medicine and electricity.
- Widespread affirmation of the rights of both Palestinians and Israelis to exist and to live in peace and security, recognizing this as a foundational principle of international law and a prerequisite for any lasting peace.
- An end to the development of illegal settlements in the Palestinian territories.
- The acknowledgment of the reality of apartheid and unimpeded access and support for international accountability mechanisms, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other appropriate humanitarian and legal institutions, to conduct truly independent investigations into all war crimes and crimes against humanity, to ensure accountability.
- Support for the resilience and witness of Christian churches and communities, upholding their right to remain on their land and to freely practice their faith.
- The UK government to end all arms sales to Israel, until it can be independently verified that they are not being used to violate international humanitarian law. We urge the UK government to use all diplomatic channels to establish a just peace and a hopeful and secure future for all in Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

We also call on our Baptist Churches to:

- Engage in deep listening to those impacted by this, and other wars – making a choice to open our eyes and ears to all who suffer. (Ecclesiastes 4:1, Proverbs 21:13)
- Stand fervently against antisemitism and islamophobia. Repenting where these sins have infiltrated our own lives, while acting to bridge divisions and work towards peace, understanding, compassion and reconciliation across wider society. (Matthew 22:37-39, Romans 12:18)
- Persistently pray for peace. (Matthew 5:9, 1 Timothy 2:1-2)
- Write to our MPs, advocating for the rights of the oppressed. (Proverbs 31:8-9)
- Offer practical support, however we are able. (Micah 6:8, Matthew 25:40, 45)

Finally, we commit to deepen our understanding of the challenges faced by Israelis and the Palestinian people. To continue to listen, pray, speak and act for justice. To partner alongside trusted friends within and beyond our extended Baptist family, to amplify our voice in the public square and to welcome accountability for our own actions and inactions.

[The Baptists Together Core Leadership Team \(CLT\)](#) is an expression of covenant and interdependence for us as Baptists. It draws together many of those offering leadership across our Movement (Regional Team Leaders, College Principals, Specialist Team

Leaders, President, Treasurer, General Secretary, the Moderators of Council and the Trustee Board, together with a leader from each of our current priority areas) and its purpose is to perceive what God is doing, to encourage flourishing local churches and to model together what it means to be a Kingdom Movement.

[BMS World Mission](#) mobilises people, resources and skills across the Global Church to share the good news of Jesus and practical hope where they're needed most. They work hand-in-hand with global organisations, mission workers and supporters to share Christ and nurture disciples, alleviate suffering and injustice and enable all God's people to play their part in his mission.