



THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

LUTHERISCHER WELTBUND – FEDERACIÓN LUTERANA MUNDIAL – FÉDÉRATION LUTHÉRIENNE MONDIALE

Office of the General Secretary

H.E. Mr Ariel Sharon
Prime Minister
State of Israel

10 May 2002

Your Excellency,

It is with deep shock and concern that I learned about the latest suicide bombing on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. I deeply deplore and mourn with you, the relatives and friends of the brutally killed persons and the people of Israel the deaths of these fifteen innocent civilians. I am abhorred by the continuation of the series of suicide bombings and condemn such terrorist acts in the strongest possible way.

While I understand your and your people's anger and frustration and I acknowledge your duty to protect civilians against such attacks I plead with you to demonstrate responsible leadership through restraint and not by pursuing retaliation that undermines the goal for peace.

I know from my contacts with Christian Churches and institutions in Gaza that the Gaza Palestinians are extremely desperate. The situation in Gaza is volatile to the extent that military retaliation will lead to heavy loss of life on both sides. This in itself will deepen hostilities. I am convinced that showing restraint now will be understood by Palestinians and the international community as your readiness to find a negotiated political solution.

I pray to God that He gives you the wisdom to take the appropriate decisions that will lead to a just peace in the Holy Land.

Yours respectfully,

Ishmael Noko
General Secretary

*P.O. Box 2100, Route de Ferney 150,
CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland
Tel +41 22 791 61 11, Direct +41 22 791 63 63
Fax +41 22 791 66 30, E-mail igk@lutheranworld.org*

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