

Middle East Network Newsletter - **Action Alert**

May 7, 2010

STOP WEST BANK DEPORTATION THREAT NOW

New Israeli military orders are causing widespread concern about their possible effect on Palestinians and internationals in the West Bank.

The new orders, numbered 1649 and 1650 and issued October 13, 2009 with an effective date of April 13, 2010, are revisions to previous orders from 1969 which dealt with people entering the West Bank from neighboring Arab countries.

The problematic nature of the new orders hinges on their redefining the term "infiltrator" in broad and vague terms, potentially placing thousands of Palestinians at risk for deportation and creating new insecurities for internationals working in the West Bank.

Calling the amended orders, "draconian legislation," ten [human rights organizations in Israel](#) are mounting a challenge to their implementation.

The ELCA has spoken out through the voice of the Middle East Ready Bench, an advocacy caucus group of the Conference of Bishops. All nine bishops from the Middle East caucus signed an April 30 letter to U.S. Secretary Clinton asking, "that the U.S. government exert its influence to ensure that the orders in question are immediately frozen and ultimately rescinded."

The bishops wrote, "We recognize and appreciate Israel's need to provide for its security, but it is unclear how the present orders contribute to this goal."

They added, "The orders do, however, have the potential to further disrupt normal life for thousands of West Bank residents, and in this regard we are concerned that their implementation could be an additional violation of international law, including the fourth Geneva Convention, which requires Israel, as the occupying power, to safeguard the welfare of those living under occupation."

Take action today: Send an e-mail to the U.S. President to let the administration know that you support the bishops' message, with copies to [your representative and senators](#).

Tell U.S. leaders, "I am concerned about new Israeli military orders that put West Bank residents and internationals at risk for deportation. The vague and ambiguous wording in the orders is likely to create a climate of fear and insecurity and to further disrupt the lives of thousands of West Bank residents. The new orders could undermine prospects for peace at a time when the U.S. is working hard to bring the parties together for talks. I urge you to work to ensure that the orders (numbered 1649 and 1650) are immediately frozen and ultimately rescinded."

Take action now.

Click here for the full text of the bishops' letter.

Click here to read the ELCA news release about the letter.

For more information on the Israeli military orders, [click here](#).



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