



*il Sindaco*

**An appeal from Assisi to the United Nations Organization  
and to the Authorities of Israel and Palestine**

To the Secretary General of the United Nations Organization

**Mr Antonio Guterres**

To the President of the State of Israel

**Mr Reuven Rivlin**

To the President of the National Palestinian Authority

**Mr Mahmūd Abbās**

To the Prime Minister of the State of Israel

**Mr Benjamin Netanyahu**

Dear brothers,

"The Holy Land is burning! We beg you, stop this hell. "

With these words of Br. Ibrahim Faltas ofm, which reach us today from Jerusalem, we implore you to do everything in your power to stop what is happening, and which you are also personally experiencing.



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In Jerusalem, in Israel, in Palestine, a mosaic of population lives in the same territory. On this land, which billions of people in the world consider holy, it cannot continue to shed blood, innocent blood, the blood of civilians and women, the blood of children.

Our heartfelt appeal reaches you from Assisi, the city of Santa Chiara (St Calair) and San Francesco (St Francis). Many spiritual children of St. Francis, many of our friends and brothers, live in the Holy Land, they know every feeling and every yearning of these places and of those who live there, they love these territories as our Saints loved them.

Over the years Assisi has always tried to foster dialogue between Israel and Palestine.

Assisi has been twinned with Bethlehem since 1989 and has become the place and leader of the Italian cities twinned with Bethlehem to launch messages of peace in the name of the rights of the Palestinian and Israeli populations. The friendship of Assisi with Israel passes through the salvation of many Jews in the years '43 / '44, thanks to our fellow citizens Righteous among the Nations such as Bishop Nicolini, the men and women religious and laity who risking their lives saved over 300 human lives. Assisi conferred honorary citizenship for Peace to Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas. All the Italians who survived the Shoah in 2020 have recognized honorary citizens for Peace. There are many friars who are sons of Assisi who live in the Custody of the Holy Land, in the midst of the mosaic of cultures and religions, which is above all a mosaic of people. In recent years Assisi has become a place of dialogue, favoring the meeting between the diplomatic representatives of Israel and Palestine, on the tomb and in the places of St. Francis. And how prophetic that Pope Francis signed the encyclical Letter "Fratelli Tutti" on the day of the Transit of the Seraphic Father St Francis in the pandemic year.

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St. Francis, who felt that he was a brother to the sun, the sea and the wind, knew that he was even more united with those who were of his own flesh. Everywhere he sowed peace and walked alongside the poor, the abandoned, the sick, the discarded, the least. [Fratelli Tutti #2]

The spiritual children of St. Francis have lived for over 800 years in the Holy Land, and in the charism of their Seraphic Father, they regard everyone as brothers and sisters, regardless of whether they are Israeli citizens, of Jewish religion or lay, Israeli Arabs, Catholic Israelis or Muslims, Palestinian Christians or Muslims, lay people, Palestinians from Jerusalem or with other titles and status: St. Francis teaches us, with revolutionary courage, that we are all persons, we are human beings, we are brothers and sisters. In Israel and Palestine, in Jerusalem and in the Gaza Strip, there are only men, women and children, and for this alone they all have the same rights. And they all have the right to live, and none of them can die from the blind and scandalous violence we are witnessing right now. We receive news of guerrillas, unprecedented violence, dead and wounded civilians and children killed in the Gaza Strip as well as in Israel.

None of them are guilty of ancient scars.

You must stop the slaughter of innocents!

The City of St Francis, the Saint of Peace and dialogue, the city of Pope Francis' message, cannot remain indifferent to so much suffering generated by the war that is exploding in the Holy Land.

Because "war is the denial of all rights. If we want authentic integral human development for all, we must continue without tiring in the commitment to avoid war between nations and peoples. " [FT #257]

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This is what we ask you, Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations, "to ensure the undisputed rule of law and the indefatigable recourse to negotiation, good offices and arbitration, proposed by the United Nations Charter, a true fundamental legal norm" [238].

Mr. Secretary, the United Nations has a role, a specific task, a responsibility towards the world and towards civilians and those innocent children who have lost their lives and all those who risk it at this moment: as an international community you have a very serious duty to make every possible effort to put an end to the fire between Hamas and Israel.

From Assisi, from the blessed land of St Francis and St anta Clair, we turn to you,

Mr. President of the State of Israel Reuven Rivlin,

Mr. President of the Palestinian National Authority and of the State of Palestine Mahmūd Abbās,

Prime Minister of the State of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu:

an authentic peace "can only be achieved when we fight for justice through dialogue, pursuing reconciliation and mutual development". [FT #214]

Your peoples carry ancient scars in their hearts, but you must find "paths of peace that lead to healing the wounds, there is a need for peacemakers willing to initiate healing processes and renewed encounters with ingenuity and audacity." [FT #225]

Because the suffering of your peoples is your suffering.

We address this heartfelt appeal to you with all our strength: to be artisans of peace!



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We beg you: do everything in your power to stop the violence!

Because when the question of how much Peace we have sown there, we can say that we have left no stone unturned. This is the reason why we write; in addition to the hope of Peace that overcomes all annihilated despair in us.

From Assisi, today, a cry is raised for the salvation of the Holy Land and of all its peoples, beyond any distinction of religion and culture, which gathers the yearning for a city that is not ours but belongs to the world, the Seraphic City of the Saint of Dialogue and Peace:

No more war, only Peace is Holy!

Assisi May 14, 2021

Stefania Proietti

Mayor of Assisi

Mons. Dominico Sorrentino

Archbishop of Assisi Nocera Umbra and Gualdo Tadino

Br. Marco Moroni ofm conv

Custos of the Papal Basilica of San Francesco and the Sacred Convent of Assisi

Br. Massimo Travascio ofm

Custos of the Papal Basilica of St Mary of the Angels of the Porziuncola