



## **TO THE PARLIAMENT AND GOVERNMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

We are experiencing a profound crisis of civilization worldwide. The situation of war is escalating around the world. Human rights and international law are being disregarded and violated by authoritarian and racist powers that promote inequality and war. The international system created after the Second World War is being dismantled.

The situation in Gaza cry to Heaven. Every day, Israeli troops commit countless war crimes. They bomb hospitals, schools, shelters and tents. Every day they destroy homes, farmland, drinking water and sanitation infrastructure, with no other purpose than extermination and making Gaza uninhabitable. Every day they shoot men, women and children who are only crying out for help.

Israel continues to bomb the Palestinian civilian population. To date, it has caused 59,000 deaths in Gaza and more than 9,000 in the West Bank, of which around 20,000 are children. Not satisfied with these killings, Netanyahu is preventing food and medicine from entering the Strip, deliberately multiplying the pain, suffering, disease and hunger among the survivors. The reality in Gaza is acquiring the scandalous and cruel proportions of a historic genocide which we condemn without reservations from the most basic ethical, legal and evangelical principles. All humanity must demand accountability and responsibility for this genocide from Israel and its sponsor, the United States.

The death of children, especially from starvation, due to Israel's refusal to allow food in is outrageous. Recently, Israel allowed a negligible trickle of humanitarian aid to enter, entrusting the management of that aid to a foundation made up of military intelligence agents, protected by two US security companies composed of former CIA and military personnel. UN agencies and international NGOs have decided not to cooperate with the 'Foundation', on the grounds that its management is militarised and does not guarantee the effective and safe distribution of aid. The distribution sites resemble concentration camps, where long queues of Gazans wait for hours in the blazing sun behind barbed wire fences. On several occasions, Israeli soldiers have opened fire on the hungry people crowding the distribution areas. More than 100 people have been killed and around 300 wounded, including women and children.

More than two million Gazans, half of them minors, are surviving on the brink of what could be their last days, hungry, trapped, sick, wounded by shrapnel and displaced from their homes, without water, food, shelter, health centers or schools. Netanyahu's goal is the extermination and ethnic cleansing of the Gazan population. Netanyahu's project has the unconditional support of Trump. It is regrettable that the international community remains indifferent to this genocide. Where is Europe, the defender of human rights and of international and humanitarian law? Silence is complicit in genocide. History will judge this Europe.

In the face of this flagrant genocide, the Oscar Romero solidarity committees of Europe join the multitude of European citizens, human rights organizations, and all religious denominations, Christian, Muslim and Jewish churches, in demanding an end to the genocide,

convinced of the inviolable dignity of every human being, as established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We denounce the argument that any criticism of the genocide and war crimes committed by the Israeli government in both Gaza and the West Bank is antisemitic. We Christians are open to dialogue and interfaith coexistence with Jews and Muslims, as expressed by the late Pope Francis in his encyclical *Fratelli tutti*, in which he states that universal brotherhood and social peace are above religious beliefs and political ideologies.

We express our strongest condemnation of the actions of the United States government for its military and political support for Israel, which makes it an actor and accomplice in the devastation and humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, and in the systematic violations of international humanitarian law.

The situation in Gaza and throughout Palestine cries out for a response from the European Union. We demand a greater forcefulness from the European Union towards Israel for an end to the bombings and, in particular, we request the termination of the Association Agreement governing relations between the Israeli State and the European Union due to Netanyahu's failure to comply with the human rights standards required by that Agreement.

We call upon and demand that the governments of the European Union and around the world take a firm, clear, immediate and decisive stance of economic, diplomatic and cultural blockade against the genocidal Israeli government. We also demand the termination of arms purchase and sale contracts with Israel, so that these massacres, which are pure acts of terrorism, are stopped. Our silence would make us complicit in such slaughter, in the ethnic cleansing and war crimes against the Palestinian people. The blood of so many innocent brothers and sisters will stain our consciences if we remain silent.

We also call on the Parliament and governments of the European Union to promote dialogue between Israel and Palestine for the recognition of the Palestinian state, based on the 1993 Oslo Accords between Isaac Rabin and Yasser Arafat.

We join Pope Francis and the current pontiff Leon XIV in calling for a just, disarmed and disarming peace, demanding the release of hostages, an end to the bombings, the lifting of the blockade and the immediate entry of sufficient food and medicine. It is a requirement of our faith in the God of life, Father and Mother of all human beings, and of Jesus of Nazareth, who declared 'blessed' those who work for peace and justice.

*"No soldier is obliged to obey an order against the law of God... An immoral law, no one must obey... The Church, defender of the rights of God, of the Law of God, of human dignity, of the person, cannot remain silent in the face of such abomination... In the name of God, therefore, and in the name of this suffering people whose cries rise to heaven each day more tumultuous, I beg you, I implore you, I order you in the name of God: Stop the repression...!"*

(Last homily of Saint Oscar Romero, Archbishop and martyr of El Salvador).