



World Council of Churches

General Secretariat

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Geneva, May 9, 2016

His Excellency Mr Eviatar Manor
Permanent Representative of Israel to
the United Nations and other agencies
in Geneva
Avenue de la Paix, 1-3
1202 Geneva

Your Excellency,

I write on behalf of the World Council of Churches (WCC) to protest the detention and abusive treatment at Ben Gurion Airport last week of several participants who travelled to Israel to attend a meeting in Beit Jala of the WCC Working Group on Climate Change.

As described in the enclosed statement, some members of our Working Group were held in government detention for up to three days before being deported to their countries of origin. Others were admitted to Israel only after lengthy interrogation.

The WCC strongly protests what we regard as the excessive, unreasonable and wholly unwarranted treatment by the Israeli authorities of these representatives of WCC member churches and staff travelling to engage in discussions on climate change and environmental stewardship, at the invitation of and hosted by the WCC's member churches in the region. We believe that they are owed an immediate apology.

In the interest of clarification and better understanding, I respectfully request a meeting here in Geneva with representatives of the government of Israel. We have attempted to arrange such a meeting for the last week. The World Council of Churches trust that it is in the interest of all to address these specific incidents in order to prevent their recurrence.

In the spirit of peace and justice,

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary

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