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Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

In these days of the Lenten season, our thoughts and prayers are with you in a region of the world often characterized by war and destruction. Hatred and resentment are poisoning the coexistence of people in your country as well as in ours. After the Hamas terrorist attack on October 7th and Israel's subsequent military operation in Gaza, war and violence are spreading throughout the entire Middle East region. The danger of widespread conflict is greater than ever. The images, the death toll in the Israel-Gaza war and the reports from both sides leave us speechless and shaken.

We recognize that many people in your churches and communities therefore feel close to Jesus' desperate cry on the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" We know that you have been waiting a long time for a sign of sympathy and solidarity.

We are united by the common conviction that God is a God of love. This is what we read in the writings of the Old and New Testaments. In Ephesians we read: "Bear with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2). This is also the biblical text on which the liturgy for this year's World Day of Prayer, which was developed by Palestinian women, is based. On March 1st, we also celebrated the World Day of Prayer in ecumenical fellowship in many congregations in Germany. We listened attentively to your laments, reports and prayers.

We therefore share in your suffering and in your hope, which is founded on Jesus' resurrection.

We think especially of those of you who have become victims of violence and terror in these days of Passiontide and pray for them.

Evangelische Mission Weltweit e.V.

Sitz des Vereins: Hamburg
Vorstandsvorsitzender: Dietmar Arends
Direktor: Rainer Kiefer

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Registernummer: VR 8367

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We think of families who have had to flee, who have lost family members and who fear for their own lives.

We think of your inner turmoil, of being caught between two chairs and the feeling of helplessness.

We pray with you these days for peace for all people in the world. May it find a way especially to you, our brothers and sisters in the Middle East.

We pray and intercede for an immediate ceasefire on both sides.

May hope and love for all people with a view to the cross and resurrection not be lost, but become the strength for overcoming the challenges in everyday life, and may this hope and love lead to an end of suffering on all sides.

In intercession and solidarity with our brothers and sisters

The Executive Committee of the Evangelical Middle East Commission (EMOK) of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Lange-Sonntag'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'S' at the end.

Pastor Ralf Lange-Sonntag

Vice-Chairperson, Evangelical Middle East Commission (EMOK)