

## **WCC strongly condemns violence in and from Gaza**

**11 July 2014**

**Attacks by the Israeli military on the civilian population in Gaza, as well as firing of rockets by militants from Gaza to Israel, were strongly condemned by the World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit.**

In a statement issued on 10 July from the WCC headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, Tveit said, “We strongly condemn the indiscriminate attacks by Israeli military on the civilian population in Gaza, as we absolutely condemn the absurd and immoral firing of rockets by militants from Gaza to populated areas in Israel”.

Tveit also noted that “what is happening in Gaza now is not an isolated tragedy.”

The failure of the peace negotiations and the loss of prospects for a two-state solution to end occupation have led to this “unbearable and infernal cycle of violence and hatred that we are witnessing today,” Tveit said.

“Without an end to the occupation, the cycle of violence will continue,” he said.

The statement comes at a time when media reports have confirmed over 500 casualties in the Gaza conflict in the last week.

In the statement, Tveit said that recent events in Israel and Palestine must be seen in the context of the occupation of Palestinian territories, which began in 1967. He added that calling for an end to the occupation and the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip by Israel has remained a long-term commitment of the WCC.

“Both Israelis and Palestinians require their well-being, security and a just and genuine peace,” he said.

Tveit urged the United Nations Security Council to demand an immediate end to all kinds of violence from all parties to the conflict.

He called on the churches and religious leaders to “work together to transform the discourse of hatred and revenge that is spreading more and more in many circles in society into one that sees the other as neighbour and as equal brother and sister in the one God.”

The WCC Central Committee, the chief governing body of the WCC also expressed “deep sorrow and concern” this week over the violence, following the tragic deaths of young people in Israel and Palestine.

[Read full text of the WCC general secretary’s statement](#)