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The higher presidential committee rebut Netanyahu's lies about protecting the holy sites and Christians in Palestine.

The Higher Presidential Committee of Churches Affairs in Palestine condemned the lies which Prime Minister Netanyahu said about the situation of Christians in the Holy Land and particularly in the city of Bethlehem, at the Christian media summit organized by Israel for international Christian media. The Committee considered the speech as nonsense and an open lie confirmed by the racist laws of occupation and the continuous violations on churches and all our people including Muslims.

The Committee also pointed that this conference does not represent the Christians in Palestine and does not speak on behalf of them.

Moreover, the occupying state of Israel and its settlers are the ones who contravene the sanctity of the holy sites and enforces their racist laws to exclude Christian and Islamic religions from their natural rights, and Jews are the only ones who have privilege of first citizenship and the right to self-determination. This is exactly what the Zionist nationalism law is, which was adopted in June this year. where the Local Churches in Palestine declared clearly that this law is the greatest threat to its existence. Also, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem announced "the law of Israeli nationalism strengthens the institutionalization of racism and dispels the hopes of equality after the settlers and who stands behind them, succeeded in dispelling the hopes of peace".

As a statement issued by the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem on the same subject confirmed: "The law fails to provide any constitutional guarantees to the rights of native people and other minorities living in the country, also sends a





message to Palestinian Christians and Muslims that they are not in their homeland". This rebut what Netanyahu said : Israel is the only country that safeguards human rights and protects churches and Christians.

The presidential committee also signify that Netanyahu's claim on the emigration of Christians because Palestinian Authority persecute them especially the Christians in Bethlehem, is a clear slander and evasion from his crimes represented in the apartheid wall and the settlements that fully isolated Bethlehem from Jerusalem its natural and historical extension. Also, Netanyahu's administration forced property taxes on churches properties and institutions while they are completely exempted from taxes under the PA administration. And according to the Israeli confessions itself, the churches of Palestine have been subjected to more than fifty-three attacks over the past few years. Plus, the churches currently are being exposed to a scheme to seize their properties by fraud in the old city of Jerusalem mainly in Jaffa Gate and other important sites. These Israeli attacks that actually threaten Christian and Islamic presence.

The Higher Presidential Committee of Church Affairs calls the churches and Christians all over the world not to surrender to Netanyahu's false claims, and to support the churches of Palestine against the last occupation in history, and against the persecution they face from the State of occupation. And above that, the committee calls for solidarity with Palestinian Christians to face the plans designed to expel them from the Holy Land.

