GENSEC-2026-132

To CEC Member Churches

Brussels, 20 October 2026

Esteemed Church leaders,

Dear Sister and Brothers,

We are writing to you to inform you about the following call for action we have received from the Tent of Nations. The Tent of Nations is a Christian educational and peacebuilding farm in the hills near Bethlehem in Area C of the West Bank: https://tentofnations.com/.

The farm is run by the Lutheran Nassar family and has been involved in a decades-long legal effort to secure recognition and registration of its land rights. Last year members of the family and representatives of supporters of the project Tent of Nations visited our office to inform us about their work. We know that some CEC Member Churches are in contact and support the Tent of Nations project.

CEC has been informed of a recent decision by an Israeli military land-registration committee concerning the property claims of the Nassar family and the Tent of Nations farm near Bethlehem. According to information received from the family, the committee rejected an application to register approximately 427 dunums (42,7 hectares) of land and required registration of a significantly larger surrounding area (1000 dunums) before the process could proceed.

The military committee has ruled that the area's current classification as “State Land” will remain in effect until the entire area, including both the Nassar family's property and the surrounding land, is registered simultaneously. The family and its legal representatives

state that this requirement is inconsistent with earlier court proceedings and impossible for them to satisfy. After all, the surrounding land belongs to other families and is not theirs to claim.

The family has further informed us that restrictions on access to parts of their land have increased in recent months, affecting their ability to cultivate and use the property. These developments occur against the backdrop of a broader and increasingly difficult situation in the West Bank due to Israeli settlements and an increase of violence. The European Union has consistently held that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory are illegal under international law and constitute an obstacle to a just and lasting peace.

Unfortunately, CEC is not in a position to assess the legal merits of the case in detail since the legal documents are not publicly available. Yet the developments reported raise important concerns regarding the process, legal certainty, the protection of property, safety of the family and the volunteers, and the cultivation of the land.

The Tent of Nations has called on churches and ecumenical partners to help ensure that the case receives continued attention from national governments, European institutions, and other relevant actors. Consequently, they have asked CEC to share this situation with its Member Churches and called on CEC and its Member Churches to advocate for:

1. The registration and legal recognition of the Nassar family's 427 dunums of land, without requiring the family to register land belonging to other families.
2. The immediate lifting of restrictions on the family's access to and use of its own land, including its ability to cultivate it.
3. The protection of the family's property rights, together with measures to prevent further violations, intimidation, or attempts to dispossess the family of its land.

We wish to bring this situation to your attention and invite you to consider whether, and in what manner, engagement with relevant national authorities, political actors or other organisations may be appropriate within your own context.

We would welcome being informed of any initiatives undertaken and remain available should you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Frank-Dieter Fischbach
General Secretary

Job van Lobenstein
Programme Officer Dialogue & Advocacy, Human Rights (FoRB)