The Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Jordan and the Holy Land

الكنيسة الإنجيلية اللوثرية
في الأردن والأراضي المقدسة

Jerusalem
13 October 2026

Statement from Bishop Dr. Imad Haddad on the Attack on Starmountain (Sternberg) Support Center from Israeli Settlers

This week we as a church were very disturbed to hear about Israeli settlers trespassing and damaging agricultural facilities at the Starmountain (Sternberg) Support Center for people with disabilities near Ramallah.

The Starmountain Center is operated by our partners from the Moravian Church and serves approximately 100 children and youth with intellectual disabilities. Last Friday, the 9th of October, a large group of Jewish Israeli settlers broke into the facility, damaging the property's fence. On Monday the 11th, the farmer at the center noticed significant destruction in the greenhouse, including slashed tarpaulins, uprooted plants, and destroyed irrigation pipelines, suggesting the group broke in on Sunday as well and caused additional damage.

The severity and urgency of this situation cannot be overstated. This is illegal violent trespassing and destruction of property that could escalate even further at any time. The current physical damage caused to the facility is compounded by the intense psychological damage to those who attend and work in the center. As the Moravian Church shared in their statement, if Starmountain is no longer seen as a safe place for people with disabilities, this important work will not be able to continue.

This attack on Starmountain Center is part of an extremely concerning pattern of Israeli settler violence in the areas around Ramallah. Palestinian homes, agricultural lands and institutions are all under threat of violence, putting numerous lives at risk. No Palestinians in the West Bank are exempt from this threat, including Christian communities and institutions. As Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, I call for immediate and decisive action from international governments and faith leaders to take action to support Starmountain Center and to protect the rights of Palestinians to live in peace and safety.

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