

# *Priests urge international action to end Israeli attacks on ancient Christian town in West Bank*

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This file photo shows the ancient Christian town of Taybeh in the occupied West Bank.

Ramallah, July 9 (RHC)-- Three priests from the ancient Christian town of Taybeh in the occupied West Bank have expressed deep concern over the increasing attacks by Israeli settlers on holy sites, calling for immediate international action to put an end to the assaults posing a significant threat to its cultural heritage.

The priests of Taybeh's Latin, Melkite Greek Catholic, and Greek Orthodox Churches made the appeal in a statement on Tuesday, a day after Israeli settlers intentionally set fire near the town's cemetery and the ancient Church of Saint George, one of the most significant historical churches in Palestine dating back to the 5th century.

Speaking on behalf of themselves, the townspeople, and their congregations, the priests denounced the assaults as threats to Taybeh's security and stability.

These threats, they asserted, go beyond targeting the town geographically, and stressed that they aim to undermine the dignity of Taybeh's Christian residents while jeopardizing their historical and religious legacy.

The priests further noted that Israeli settlers' systematic attacks have repeatedly targeted local lands, holy sites, and private properties, thus intensifying the risks under an atmosphere of silence from official authorities—a situation that magnifies fears and diminishes protections for the town.

They went on to say that the eastern part of Taybeh, comprising over half of the town's domain and serving as a hub for agriculture, is particularly threatened. This area has become the target of illegal settlement outposts that expand quietly under military protection, serving as a launchpad for further attacks on the land and its people.

The priests further warned that remaining silent in the face of these attacks is no longer an option, urging consuls, ambassadors, and church leaders worldwide to launch immediate investigations into the arson attacks and pervasive abuse plaguing Taybeh.

They also called for concerted diplomatic pressure on Israeli authorities to restrict settler incursions into the town, as well as international observation missions to document these violations while advocating for economic aid, agricultural initiatives, and legal assistance for Taybeh's residents.

"Forcibly removing farmers from their land, threatening their churches, and surrounding their town is a blow to the living heart of this nation. Yet, our hope remains steadfast: that truth and justice will ultimately prevail," the priests said, as they concluded their statement.

[ SOURCE: PRESS TV and NEWS AGENCIES ]

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