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Government of Japan,

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Call to stop the forced eviction in Sheikh Jarrah and military attacks by Israel

The clashes triggered by eviction orders against Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem, have been intensifying with a large number of injuries and deaths each day. The eviction orders by the Israeli Magistrate Court that preceded this situation is a violation of international law and basic human rights. The YWCA of Japan, as a part of the World YWCA movement that strives to “create justice, gender equality and a world without violence and war”, has long worked in solidarity with the YWCA of Palestine. We call on the Japanese Government to take a stronger stance in urging the Israeli Government to respect its obligations under international law, and to stop the violence and military attacks against the Palestinian people.

According to the call by the YWCA of Palestine on 10th May, “An Israeli court ordered at least 13 out of a total of 28 Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah locality to vacate the houses they have been inhabiting for generations to pave the way for the construction of an illegal Jewish settlement. These families have been living in Sheikh Jarrah since they were evicted from their homes in 1948 Nakba (catastrophe) when over 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly expelled from their villages, towns and cities by the Zionist militias. Between May and the beginning of August 2021, 59 persons, including 17 children will have nowhere to go while Israeli settlers occupy their homes in which they have been living for generations.”

Settlement in occupied areas including East Jerusalem and confiscation of private properties by occupiers are a clear violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which has been pointed out a number of times in United Nations resolutions, including in the UN Security Council. The residents of Sheikh Jarrah and their supporters were protesting against this unjust deprivation in a peaceful manner. The Israeli forces protected the settlers who were harassing and committing violence against the residents, restricted entry with fences, and continued physical attack on the protestors including spraying skunk water.

A large number of lives have been lost by the clashes caused by this violation of international law. In Gaza, as of 14th May, 119 people including 31 children have been killed by the severe bombings by Israel. Further violence must be stopped. Despite the concerns already expressed by the UN and a number of countries, Israel is further escalating the attacks on Gaza rather than ceasing them. The international society must take more action than it has done.

As a movement working for peace, the YWCA of Japan calls on the Japanese Government to take a stronger position in urging the Israeli Government to respect its obligations under the international law, immediately withdraw the eviction orders to the residents of Sheikh Jarrah and stop the violence and military attacks on the Palestinians.