



ICCJ criticizes International Fides Services News Release on Israel

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Statement

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ICCJ - Heppenheim - On 18 April the International Fides Services of the Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Rome, released as breaking news a report about the World Council of Churches' (WCC) support of the UN human rights commission resolution concerning the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Reading this report about the WCC one gets puzzled by the fact that Fides includes without any comment a quotation from the Olive Branch Bulletin, Jerusalem, stating: 'Exactly on Easter Sunday evening and the days after they started again their dirty game of shelling the homes of many civilians in Beit Jala, Bethlehem and Beit Sahour'.

It is not only puzzling that Fides without any clarification to the reader adds a quotation which is not part of the original WCC release, but it is deeply disturbing that Fides in this way circulates a passage which is reminiscent of medieval portrayal of Jews and Judaism. The sentence indicates that Israelis on purpose acted to spoil the Christian Holidays.

In the name of the Executive Board of the International Council of Christians and Jews its General Secretary, Rev. Friedhelm Pieper, sent a letter of concern to Fides Services informing that the ICCJ takes strong exception to the circulation of that abhorrent passage as well as to the way it is presented in the midst of a report about a WCC statement.

At a time of increased tension between Israel and the Palestinians the ICCJ expects from all responsible religious leadership and all religious news services to weigh their language with double sensitivity, says Rev. Pieper.