



Christian Zionism

and Religious, Political and Economic Fundamentalisms: A Palestinian-Latin American Conversation

Courtesy of the conference planning committee



Poster of the conference.

Representatives from Palestine, nine countries in Latin America, and the Caribbean (Abya Yala) countries, twenty universities and academic institutions from four continents, and several church bodies from across the globe convened in Santiago, Chile, November 4-10, 2022, to participate in a conference addressing the theme of Christian Zionism, and religious, political, and economic fundamentalisms.

Leaders of the indigenous Mapuche community offered a spiritual welcoming ceremony to open the conference.

Participants acknowledged that Christian Zionism is no longer a phenomenon of the Global North, having increasingly spread across the Global South, as a result of several expressions of coloniality and Anglo-Saxon empire. The conference looked at Christian Zionism from a geopolitical perspective as a Christian lobby in support of Israeli settler colonialism of Palestinian land and people, weaponizing biblical texts and theological constructs. Christian Zionist ideas are widespread in all Latin American countries, combined with far-right political and theocratic movements and systems of exclusion. Scholars of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faith were in agreement in opposing Zionism embraced by Christians, Jews, and Muslims, as well as opposing the equalization of anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism.

Recognizing the pervasiveness of global apartheid, participants reaffirmed their commitment to resist all forms of racism and exclusion.

The presentations focused on how Israeli settler colonialism swarms all aspects of Palestinian lives by imposing a system and laws of apartheid through dispossession of land and resources, demographic engineering, and military occupation. It became clear that the State of Israel is not only supporting the spread of Christian Zionist ideologies, but is increasingly exporting military equipment, training, and surveillance technology to Latin America and beyond.

Participants discussed strategies to address the challenge of Christian Zionism, settler-colonialism, and militarization, and formulated a set of

recommendations for the work ahead, including:

- Set up geopolitical south-to-south interdisciplinary decolonial encounters, and interfaith and intersectional solidarity alliances, involving religious leaders and theologians, young people, emerging activists, feminists, artists, and indigenous people.
- Develop common Latin American and Palestinian networks and strategies.
- Use the 75th *Nakba* commemoration to highlight the ongoing settler-colonial project in Palestine and to engage in effective action. In line with current world practice, impose political, economic, and cultural sanctions on countries exercising illegal occupation.
- Translate Palestinian and Latin American theological and academic work into respective languages and make them accessible as tools to educate communities in both contexts.
- Encourage decolonial and socially responsible tourism to Palestine.

The conference ended with a cultural night at the Club *Palestino* in honor of the fact that Chile hosts the largest Palestinian diaspora in Latin America.



SCAN TO SHARE



The Palestinian delegation to the conference.



The planning committee of the conference.



Dr. Prof Rev Mitri Raheb with indigenous Chileans.