



Understanding the Issue

“The United Methodist Church opposes continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and also the Syrian Golan Heights, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian homes, the continued blockade of Gaza where over half the residents are children, the military detention of Palestinian children—often without trial—the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements, and any vision of a “Greater Israel” that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its surroundings.”

(Book of Resolutions #6111 first passed in 2004, to be voted on again this year)

After more than 75 years of ethnic cleansing and settler colonialism in historic Palestine, after 57 years of a brutal occupation in the small amount of land left for Palestinians, after an inhuman blockade that has been slowly destroying the people of Gaza since 2007, having authoritative reports from the world’s leading human rights experts that Israel has created an [apartheid](#) regime in all the land it controls, and especially faced today with the terrifying events we have seen in the Holy Land since October, we need to act on our convictions and strengthen our commitment to peace in Palestine/Israel.

Values

- Peace
- Ending occupation
- Human rights
- Human rights of children
- Ending child incarceration
- Responsible investing
- Feeding the hungry
- Freedom for all God’s people
- Ending terrorism
- Ending Colonialism

Legislation Overview

The most important single action our church can take for a just peace in the Holy Land is to stop funding the Israeli occupation with church investment funds. Additionally, we ask for support of Palestinian children’s human rights and for The United Methodist Church to oppose the incarceration of children worldwide. The church also has three long standing statements that are up for renewal: 1. Opposing the Israeli settlements and occupation of Palestinian territory and calling for an end to financial support for the occupation 2. Supporting United Nations resolutions that seek justice in Palestine/Israel and 3. Providing guidelines for responsible tourism in the Holy Land.

There is also a damaging and inaccurate resolution (**Vote NO on Petition #21085-CC**) that should be rejected, for it seeks to reverse a positive United Methodist divestment action of the past.

Additional legislation associated with justice in Palestine/Israel can be found in the [Plumbline “Defending Free Speech and Justice Advocacy.”](#)

Analysis

In the funding petitions, “debt” and “sovereign debt” refer to government bonds. The petitions ask United Methodists to avoid buying the government bonds of countries that are maintaining prolonged military occupations – at this time, Turkey, Morocco, and Israel – as identified in UN Security Council resolutions and International Court of Justice resolutions. Israel’s entire national economy and government is dedicated to maintaining their very expensive and difficult occupation of Palestinian territory. When anyone invests in Israeli government bonds they are investing in Israel’s occupation. Amending ¶1717 as the petition states will ensure that United Methodist funds will not be used to support the systemic human rights violations and crimes of these occupier governments against oppressed peoples, so that our church’s investment practices will better reflect the values of our church.

Resources

- Supporting resources for each of these petitions:
https://www.kairosresponse.org/gc2020_resolutions_resources.html
- Webinar [The Fierce Urgency of Now: Legislation for the United Methodist General Conference 2024](#)

Recommended Action

On Funding of Occupations

Vote YES on Petition #20539-CA page 188 ADCA “Exclude Government Debt of Countries Involved in Prolonged Military Occupations”

Vote YES on Petition #20267-GA page 657 ADCA “Sustainable and Socially Responsible Investment” which amends ¶1717.

Vote NO on Petition #21085-CC page 1266 ADCA Vol 3 “Rejection of Anti-Israel Blacklist”

On Children

Vote YES on Petition #20873-CC-R9999 ADCA Vol 3 Page 1261 “Addressing Israeli Detention of Children” with amendment. Amend to add “therefore be it resolved” and “be it further resolved” from Petition #20622-CC page 285 ADCA.

Vote YES on Petition #20597-CB page 235 ADCA “Child Incarceration”

On Settlements and the Israeli Occupation

Vote YES on Petition #20554-CC page 269 ADCA “Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land”

On Human Rights

Vote YES on Petition # 20553-CC page 269 ADCA “United Nations Resolutions on the Israel-Palestine Conflict”

On Responsible Tourism

Vote YES on Petition #20855 page 1253 ADCA “Holy Land Tours”

This document was prepared in collaboration with United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR). MFSA and UMKR are members of the Love Your Neighbor Coalition. Learn more www.lyncolalition.org.