

From: Board of Missions Israel-Palestine Task Force
17 members: 15 present, 15 Yes and 0 No votes. March 30, 2009
Co-sponsored by the Board of Church and Society (via the Executive Committee)
4 members: 4 present, 4 Yes and 0 No votes. March 30, 2009
Contact Person: John Chamberlin
Financial Impact: None

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**LEVERAGING THE POWER OF UNITED METHODIST INVESTMENT
PORTFOLIOS TO AFFECT FAITHFUL AND POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE
OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES**

The United Methodist Church affirms Israel's right to exist within permanent, recognized and secure borders, and Palestinians' rights to self-determination and formation of a viable state.

The Fourth Geneva Convention forbids an occupying power from moving its own people into territory it occupies, and there are currently more than 500,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied Palestinian territories, with thousands of new settler housing units being planned and constructed, making a viable Palestinian state less likely.

Palestinian land is still being confiscated for these settlements and for construction of a separation wall now advancing deep inside the Palestinian territories.

To make room for such illegal settlements Israel has illegally demolished hundreds of Palestinian homes, leaving thousands of Palestinians homeless, destroyed hundreds of acres of olive trees, devastating the Palestinian economy, and confiscated thousands of acres of land in the Palestinian territories for Israeli settlements, and built over 200 miles of exclusive settlement access roads, all of which has placed nearly half of the Palestinian Territories under settler use and control.

The above illegal destruction of Palestinian homes and economy, and confiscation of Palestinian land, is made possible by the use of armored bulldozers, helicopter gunships, tanks and other equipment supplied to Israel by multinational corporations that profit from such violent and deadly activities.

“The United Methodist Church opposes continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian homes, 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.” (2008 Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church, Resolution 6073: “Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land”).

The United Methodist Church should not profit from the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land or the destruction of Palestinian homes, orchards, and lives.

The United Methodist Church requires careful consideration of divestment from companies that support violations of human rights; (2008 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, Paragraph 716: “Socially Responsible Investing”).

We are committed to ensuring that our denomination’s money is used in a manner consistent with our beliefs, with international law, and with Christ’s teaching,

We are called to support members of Christ’s church around the world, including Palestinian Christians who are being forced to leave the Holy Land due to Israel’s confiscation of their property and the severe hardships of living under occupation,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Israel-Palestine Task Force shall, within the next twelve months, examine and submit to investment managers for United Methodist congregations and institutions in the California-Nevada Annual Conference a list of companies that support in a significant way the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, and shall maintain the list, re-evaluating the relationship of companies to the occupation. Before placing a company on the list, the Task Force shall write to that company, explain the committee’s concerns, and request a change in the company’s relationship to the Israeli occupation. If no change in policy is reported within 90 days as being taken or contemplated, the company’s name shall be placed on the divestment list along with explanatory details and shared with all congregations and institutions in the California-Nevada Annual Conference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that United Methodist churches and investment managers are encouraged to examine their portfolios to see whether current investments include companies on the divestment list described above. Those who find they are holding investments in such companies are urged to consider divesting from them.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the California-Nevada Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church calls on the U.S. government, the government of Israel, and the elected Palestinian leadership to reject all acts of aggression and violence, to respect the equality and dignity of all the region’s people, and to forge solutions based on the principles of international law and human rights.