

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2022-B002
Title: Let there be sight! - Proposal for Episcopal Church Assistance in Yemen and Funding for an Ophthalmologist Medical Director at the Ras Morbat Eye Clinic in Aden
Proposer: The Rt. Rev. James Magness
Topic: Middle East

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-B013 Call for Governmental Response and Humanitarian Relief to the Crisis in Yemen
1976-D074 Condemn Acts of Terrorism and Nations Which Support Them

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.

B002 - Let there be sight! - Proposal for Episcopal Church Assistance in Yemen and funding for an Ophthalmologist Medical Director at the Ras Morbat Eye Clinic in Aden

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: The Rt. Rev. James Magness

Endorsed by: The Rt. Rev. Scott Hayashi, The Rt. Rev. David Bailey

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: Yes

Cost: \$90,900.00

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 07 - Social Justice & International Policy

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, as followers of Jesus Christ, and recognizing at the heart of our Christian faith is Jesus' command to "...Love each other as I have loved you" (John 15:12), address our deep concern and dismay over the overwhelming health care crisis resulting from the ongoing conflict in Yemen, now in its seventh year, and the life-threatening humanitarian crisis caused therein, and be it further

Resolved, that The Episcopal Church, in a commitment to the people of Yemen, provide funds for three consecutive years for a new ophthalmologist to serve in a senior capacity at the Ras Morbat Clinic Christ Church, Aden, with these funds being channeled through the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf who maintain the Clinic, and be it further

Resolved, that the Office of Government Relations, in collaboration with the Episcopal Public Policy Network, call on appropriate members of the United States Congress, along with appropriate members of the United Nations to engage in every possible effort to relieve

human suffering and find a political solution to the complex ongoing war in Yemen, and be it further

Resolved, that the Office of Government Relations, in collaboration with the Episcopal Public Policy Network, work to enable unobstructed access in the conflict areas for humanitarian and medical relief organizations, and journalists, and be it further

Resolved, that the Office of Government Relations, in collaboration with the Episcopal Public Policy Network, the Office of Global Partnerships and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society coordinate their efforts with the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf to prepare a status report that will be submitted to the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church, or a committee they designate, at six-month intervals, , and be it further

Resolved, that the 80th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation for the ophthalmologist of \$90,900 for the implementation of this resolution.

Explanation

- Yemen, on the Gulf of Aden, has been struggling with a 7+ year Civil War, fueled by 3d party entities (e.g., U.S. has been part of the Saudi Coalition attempting to defeat the Houthis)
- Civilian conditions remain wretched, with widespread hunger, disease, and war injuries widespread. Eleven (11) million children need humanitarian assistance.
- Consistently referred to as "...the world's worst humanitarian crisis"
- Also referred to as the "Forgotten War"; the world has been able to ignore Yemen's plight as other crises emerge.

Proposed Initiative in Yemen

Goals to be Met

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised..." Luke 4:16

- Employ a full-time Medical Director Ophthalmologist at the Ras Morbat Eye Clinic
- Expand the services of the Ras Morbat Eye Clinic within Aden and Yemen. The Clinic is fully operated by the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.
- Continue to develop a close community partnership with the Muslim community in Aden
- Anglican Church representatives now believe it is appropriate, with increasing civil security in Aden city, to consider placing a resident Christian doctor as Medical Director of the Ras Morbat Clinic, located within the Anglican Christ Church Center. The Muslims who work at the clinic would welcome this professional contribution to the work, and they welcome the humanitarian/religious statement that would be made. It is clear from current conversations with civil society in Aden that the re-establishment of Christian presence for both the church and the clinic would be very

welcome indeed. There has been a history of foreign Christian doctors at Ras Morbat successfully bringing a message of health to the poor in Yemen.

- This initiative will focus on correcting blindness as a major medical component. *“Cataract[s] w[ere] found to be the main cause of **uniocular (21.3 percent)** and **binocular blindness (46.3 percent)** in Yemen which is a developing country that need[s] to expand further medical and surgical facilities especially in rural area; this is similar to that found in other studies in developing countries.” (National Center for Biotechnology Information-NCBI).*
- *“In 2012, it was estimated that there were around **76,000 blind Yemenis**, most of them living in rural areas” (ISBN 9789004221505).*
- *“...**blindness from cataracts can be completely reversed**. By having your cataracts removed during cataract surgery you can regain clear vision.” (www.bergfeinfield.com)*

Funding Requested

- *Necessary **salary** funds for a three-year commitment would be \$30,300 pa (per annum). Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf to provide lodging and other miscellaneous support needs for the new ophthalmologist.*
- ***Management** of these funds will be with the Episcopal Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) and the Finance Officer of the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf*

Partners

This proposal was prepared by Rt. Rev. James Magness (Ret.) and Bruce Freeman, Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF) National Executive Council in cooperation with the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, especially Archdeacon William Schwartz, Rev. Canon Robert Edmunds, Archdeacon Christopher Fatcher and Archbishop Michael A.O. Lewis. Also supporting the initiative: members of the joint Yemen Action group (YAG), and Catherine Smythe-Zajc and Debbie Hunter and other members of the Trinity Cathedral Cleveland, Ohio EPF Chapter.

For a Detailed Overview of Our Proposal

<https://bit.ly/366LAdJ>

Thank you for your Support!

220401 @ 1100 EDT

Middle east partners:

Mission to Seafarers may be able to co-fund the priest

Peace talks with some hope

Hopeful that:

Can parallel with Ukraine

Happy-to-glad-to-happy

**World Mission Committee of the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church, or
whatever committee they designate, at six-month intervals**

Accommodation is provided for the Ophthalmologist



Resolution Number: 2018-B013
Title: Call for Governmental Response and Humanitarian Relief to the Crisis in Yemen
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, as followers of Jesus Christ, recognize our moral imperative to address our deep concern and dismay over the ongoing conflict in Yemen, now in its fourth year, and the humanitarian crisis caused by the conflict, which has left 22 million people—three-quarters of the country’s population—in need of humanitarian assistance including food and clean water; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church direct the Office of Government Relations to call upon the U.S. government: 1) to observe the embargo of arms sales to all parties in the conflict, as called for by the United Nations, and specifically to avoid supplying munitions, military equipment or technology that could be used in the conflict, as well as logistical and financial support for such transfers; 2) to call upon all parties to the conflict to allow unobstructed access in the conflict areas for humanitarian relief organizations, medical relief personnel, human rights investigators, and journalists; and 3) to express an urgent need for a politically negotiated solution; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recognize that throughout the Middle East region access to water and sustainable agriculture are serious problems and a primary source of conflict; and encourage the Episcopal Church and Episcopal Relief and Development to undertake, in partnership with the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, relief and long-term economic development projects in areas such as education, job creation, and health care, as well as sustainable solutions for the lack of access to water.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 883.



Resolution Number: 1976-D074

Title: Condemn Acts of Terrorism and Nations Which Support Them

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred

Final Text:

Resolved, That this 65th General Convention condemns the use of terrorism against civilian populations as a political weapon; and be it further

Resolved, That this convention condemns the actions of those nations, such as Libya, Uganda, and South Yemen, which provide bases and havens for international terrorist bands.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis 1976* (New York: General Convention, 1977), p. C-113.