

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D005
Title: Solidarity with the Palestinian Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions Movement
Proposer: Mok, Dr. Carolyn
Topic: Middle East, Socially Responsible Investment

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-C013 Oppose Legislation that Penalizes Non-Violent Boycotts or Divestitures
2018-D028 On the Topic of Opposing Anti-Boycott Legislation (Rejected)
2015-D016 On the Topic of Investment in Israeli-Occupied Palestine (Rejected)
2012-C060 On the Topic of a Resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict (Rejected)
2000-B016 Affirm Refugee Rights of Palestinians and Israelis
1988-D017 Support Conscientious Decisions Regarding Individual Participation in War
1985-A077 Encourage Broad Coalitions for Non-violent Social Change
1982-D020 Affirm the Lambeth Statement on Non-violent Action for Justice and Peace
1982-D021 Request a Ministry to Individuals Who Make a Conscientious Decision on War
1976-D070 Call for Efforts to Restore Freedom in Oppressive States

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

2018-D027 Call on US Government to Cooperate with Investigations into Israeli and Palestinian Human Rights Violations
2015-C018 Affirm the Work of Christians in Israel and the Occupied Territories
2003-C024 Support Non-violent Foreign Policy
1994-D005 Call for Church Opposition to Violence
1994-D031 On the Topic of Northern Ireland (Rejected)
1988-B052 Endorse the Boycott Against International Oil Companies in South Africa

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, 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](#).

D005 - Solidarity with the Palestinian Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions Movement

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Mok, Dr. Carolyn

Endorsed by: Neznok, Mary, Powell, The Rev. RJ, Evans, The Rev. Boyd

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 06 - Social Justice & International Policy

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st convention of the Episcopal Church acknowledge as consistent with established Church policy the demands of the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions movement, which are: ending Israeli occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the separation wall; recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church acknowledge boycotts, economic divestment, and sanctions as time-honored means of nonviolent resistance to oppression long respected and upheld by the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church acknowledge and endorse the 2020 Kairos Palestine statement, in which Palestinian Christians expressed firm solidarity with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement; and be it further

Resolved, That the 81st Convention of the Episcopal Church recognize the legitimacy of BDS and express its solidarity with it.

Explanation

The often unfairly-maligned Palestinian [Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions \(BDS\) movement](#) was initiated in 2005 by 170 Palestinian civil society organizations as a means of building a nonviolent international campaign in support of fundamental Palestinian human and political rights. Thus, BDS originates from an occupied, indigenous population living under Israeli military occupation and blockade. It has received broad, worldwide [support](#) from governments, banks, corporations, churches, academic organizations, and artists. There is nothing in either the [BDS demands or its tactics](#) that is even remotely anti-Jewish. Indeed, the three demands of the BDS movement are entirely consistent with established policy of the Episcopal Church. These demands, which are summarized in the first resolve, are:

1. *Ending Israeli occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the separation wall.* The Reaffirmation of Commitment to Peace in Israel/Palestine, published in the minutes of the November 12-15, 2006 meeting of the Church's Executive Council, calls for "the withdrawal by Israel from all occupied Palestinian Territories as established in 1967 West Bank".
2. *Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality.* At the 80th General Convention in 2022, the Church passed resolution C039, which urged the President of the US and Congress "to take action to oppose Israeli laws and practices that result in unequal rights for two peoples".
3. *Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.* Since its 73rd General Convention, the Episcopal Church has stood firmly in support of this demand. The second resolve of resolution 2000-B016 reads, "That the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirm the principle of the right of return for every Palestinian, as well as restitution/compensation for their loss as called for by the United Nations".

With respect to the *tactics* of BDS, the Montgomery bus boycott, the United Farm Workers' grape boycott, and the international boycott of apartheid South Africa are but three examples of the use of economic pressure to address injustice. Christians played leading roles in these nonviolent campaigns. BDS now joins this great tradition.

Finally, support for BDS is a response to the Palestinian ecumenical Christian movement Kairos Palestine and its international partner, the Christian coalition Global Kairos for Justice. A 2020 appeal from these groups, ["Cry for Hope: A Call to Decisive Action"](#) includes this on BDS: "The 2005 Palestinian call for Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) provides a framework for economic, cultural, and academic measures and for direct political advocacy as nonviolent means to end occupation and oppression. The purpose of BDS is not to punish or isolate Israel. It is rather to exert pressure on Israel to comply with international law, and to call upon its government and its people, in the spirit of the Word of God, to enter into the ways of justice and peace, thereby affirming its own rights as well as the rights of the Palestinian people."

Note: this resolution and/or its explanation contains external references, such as URLs of websites, that may not be in the required languages of General Convention. Because of copyright restrictions, the General Convention cannot provide translations. However, your web browser may be able to provide a machine translation into another language. If you need assistance with this, please contact gc.support@episcopalchurch.org.



Resolution Number: 2022-C013
Title: Oppose Legislation that Penalizes Non-Violent Boycotts or Divestitures
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church call on the President of the United States, the U.S. Congress, Governors, and State Legislatures to oppose legislation that penalizes or criminalizes support for all nonviolent boycotts, divestment and/or sanctions, especially on behalf of Palestinian human rights, as an infringement of First Amendment rights.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 494-495.



Resolution Number: 2018-D028
Title: On the Topic of Opposing Anti-Boycott Legislation
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church urge the President and the Congress of the United States to reject legislation that would penalize companies and organizations for their participation in nonviolent boycotts on behalf of Palestinian human rights as such legislation, at both federal and state levels, would be an infringement on First Amendment rights, based on the Supreme Court's consistent definition of boycotts as protected speech; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention instruct the Office of Government Relations in Washington to inform legislators of our Church's opposition to the anti-boycott legislation pending in Congress as an infringement on the First Amendment right of free speech, and should such legislation become law, now or in the future, the Convention directs the Executive Council or the Presiding Bishop to file an amicus brief in support of court challenges to the law.



Resolution Number: 2015-D016
Title: On the Topic of Investment in Israeli-Occupied Palestine
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 78th General Convention direct the Executive Council's committee on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), consistent with existing policy of corporate engagement adopted in October 2005, to develop a list of U.S. and foreign corporations that provide goods and services that support the infrastructure of Israel's Occupation, and maintain and update such a list annually, and to vigorously conduct an audit of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) investment portfolio to determine which of these companies, if any, are in the portfolio, and report its findings to the Winter Meeting of Executive Council, 2016, to be made public through the Episcopal News Service; and be it further

Resolved, That, consistent with existing Episcopal Church policy, CSR communicate by letter, emails, meetings and otherwise with the companies identified in the DFMS investment portfolio as being involved in the maintenance of the Occupation, if any, requesting that said companies withdraw from their business operations in Occupied Palestine until it is ended, and report on such corporate engagement to the June, 2016, meeting of Executive Council to be made public through the Episcopal News service; and be it further

Resolved, That Executive Council, with the aid of its CSR committee, file shareholder resolutions with any companies earlier identified, at its Fall meeting, 2016, asking said companies who have not agreed to terminate their business operations in Occupied Palestine and with whom dialogue has not been fruitful, to begin a process of divestment; and be it further

Resolved, That upon receiving the position of said companies to these shareholder resolutions, Executive Council, by its June meeting of 2017, with the aid of the CSR committee, develop a process of divestment from those companies who have refused to divest or in which further engagement is deemed futile, and are considered by CSR to be the most egregious supporters of the infrastructure of the Occupation, and to develop a process for placing on its No Buy List those companies earlier identified as supporting the Occupation, whether currently held or not, and for Council to make known its process for divestment and adding to the No Buy List (and the companies involved) through the Episcopal News Service, and that Council provide a report to the 79th General Convention on its implementation of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention directs the Executive Council to establish a work group to identify a list of products made or businesses present in West Bank settlements (including East Jerusalem) and publishing them within one year of adjournment of this Convention so that Church entities, including congregations and individual members can seek to boycott those products and/or businesses which are illegal under international law; and be it further

Resolved, That Executive Council identify \$15,000 for the work to be done in 2015, and that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance provide \$30,000 in 2016 and \$30,000 in 2017 and \$30,000 in 2018 to fund the work of CSR on this and other issues.



Resolution Number: 2012-C060
Title: On the Topic of a Resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected [Died with Adjournment]
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 77th General Convention, mindful of the impasse in reaching a just resolution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, calls on the Executive Council (using appropriate staff) to develop and implement a strategy of advocacy and education in the Church during the next triennium to further a just resolution of the conflict utilizing existing policies and resources, including but not limited to the following:

- A robust use of the Episcopal Public Policy Network in promoting Church policies in our nation's capital
- Participating in corporate social responsibility by more vigorous and public corporate engagement with companies in the Church's investment portfolio that do business in illegal Israeli settlements or contribute to the infrastructure of the Occupation
- Identifying a project of economic engagement through a loan of at least \$200,000 from the Church's economic justice loan fund that strengthens the economic infrastructure of the Territories
- Assist individual Episcopalians by providing information on products made and distributed from illegal Israeli settlements so that they can make informed consumer choices
- An examination of actions the U.S. might take to support international law and human rights; and be it further

Resolved, That Council include in its planning a study in the next triennium in every Diocese of "KAIROS PALESTINE 2009" released in December 2009 by Palestinian Christian leaders to address the plight of Palestinian Christians living under military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza as well as those Christians living within the state of Israel who do not enjoy the full rights and privileges of Jewish-Israeli citizens; and be it further

Resolved, That the Council further consider using as a resource for this study plan an Episcopal version of Steadfast Hope (adapted from the Presbyterian original) as developed by the Palestine Israel Network of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with Justice Concerns give high priority to peace with justice in the Holy Land and report to the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church with recommendations on how best to support our Anglican brothers and sisters in the Holy Land; and be it further

Resolved, That all bishops, clergy and lay people of the Episcopal Church in the United States be encouraged to travel to the region as pilgrims and witnesses, and to provide various forms of support for the Church in the Holy Land, including the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, its parishes, and its Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Suheil Dawani, including through the sterling work of the Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Good Friday Offering, and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance provide a budget allocation of \$5,000 to Council and staff in assisting with this work.



Resolution Number: 2000-B016
Title: Affirm Refugee Rights of Palestinians and Israelis
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirm, in the light of the final status negotiations now underway, the right of Palestinians and Israelis to self-determination, independence, and sovereignty based in justice, peace, and security for the two peoples; and be it further

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirm the principle of the right of return for every Palestinian, as well as restitution/compensation for their loss as called for by the United Nations; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention through the Office of Peace and Justice Ministries (especially through the Office of Government Relations) (a) urge the officials and members of the Episcopal Church to pray and work for this position, and (b) communicate this resolution to the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the appropriate members of the Congress of the United States, the President of the Palestinian Authority, the Prime Minister of Israel, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 650.



Resolution Number: 1988-D017
Title: Support Conscientious Decisions Regarding Individual Participation in War
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 69th General Convention of the Episcopal Church declare its belief that non-violent refusal to participate in or prepare for war is a faithful response of a member of this Church and that a decision to participate in or prepare for war should be made only after careful and prayerful consideration; and be it further

Resolved, That a person making such a conscientious decision either not to participate or to participate have the respect, the support and the ministry of the Church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 275.



Resolution Number: 1985-A077
Title: Encourage Broad Coalitions for Non-violent Social Change
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 68th General Convention of the Episcopal Church encourage the formation by its clergy and laity of coalitions which, acting always in consonance with the spirit of Jesus and under obedience to the teachings of the New Testament, will have the purpose of effecting change in those structures of society which dehumanize life for God's people; and be it further
Resolved, That such coalitions be committed to a non-violent style and be encouraged to risk in dramatic ways (including political and economic action, where appropriate) a witness to the requirements which a biblically aroused social conscience seems to demand; and be it further

Resolved, That such coalitions, whenever possible, be ecumenical and open to alliances with secular coalitions.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 157.



Resolution Number: 1982-D020
Title: Affirm the Lambeth Statement on Non-violent Action for Justice and Peace
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 67th General Convention of the Episcopal Church reaffirms the statement made by the Anglican Bishops assembled at Lambeth in 1978 and adopted by the 66th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 1979, calling "Christian people everywhere...to engage themselves in non-violent action for justice and peace and to support others so engaged, recognizing that such action will be controversial and may be personally very costly;" and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention, in obedience to this call, urges all members of this Church to support by prayer and by such other means as they deem appropriate, those who engage in such non-violent action, and particularly those who suffer for conscience's sake as a result; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention calls upon all members of this Church seriously to consider the implications for their own lives of this call to resist war and work for peace for their own lives.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, New Orleans, 1982* (New York: General Convention, 1983), p. C-122.



Resolution Number: 1982-D021
Title: Request a Ministry to Individuals Who Make a Conscientious Decision on War
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 67th General Convention of the Episcopal Church declares its belief that non-violent refusal to participate in or prepare for war can be a faithful response of a member of this Church and a decision to participate in war should be made only after careful and prayerful consideration, and be it further

Resolved, That a person making such a conscientious decision to participate or not to participate should have the respect and ministry of the Church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, New Orleans, 1982* (New York: General Convention, 1983), p. C-124.



Resolution Number: 1976-D070
Title: Call for Efforts to Restore Freedom in Oppressive States
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 65th General Convention

Commend again the continued witness of the Church in such countries and affirm the aspirations of its members to achieve their goals;
Call upon the Presiding Bishop to develop dialogue with other Church jurisdictions in order to bear like witness;
Call upon those U.S.A. business concerns transacting business in such countries to act responsibly toward assisting in the achievement of such goals; and
Call upon the Government of the United States to redouble its efforts [via the U.S.], via diplomatic channels and via whatever other non-violent means are available to it, to encourage those States which engage in oppressive and racist practices, to restore freedom to practice religion, justice and dignity to all their people.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis 1976* (New York: General Convention, 1977), p. C-120.