

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-B019
TITLE: Impact Investing for Palestine
PROPOSER: The Rt. Rev. Dorsey McConnell
TOPIC: Socially Responsible Investment

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-B013 Reaffirm a Policy of Reconciliation and Restorative Justice in the Middle East
2012-B019 Support Israeli-Palestinian Peace
2012-C060 On the Topic of a Resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict (Rejected)
2006-A013 On the Topic of Investments in Support of an Economically Viable Palestine (Rejected)

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

None

Supplemental Documents: (Linked)

Executive Council Resolution EXC022013.21: [Implementation of General Convention 2012-B019](#) (see highlighted text)

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, 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 at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

B019 Impact Investing for Palestine

Proposer	The Rt. Rev. Dorsey McConnell
Endorsed by	Goff, The Rt. Rev. Susan; Hirschfeld, The Rt. Rev. A. Robert
Sponsored by	Barker, The Rt. Rev. J. Scott
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	HB / 18 - Stewardship & Socially Responsible Investing
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention affirms impact investment as a necessary means to create a sound economy and a sustainable infrastructure in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip because without these measures there can and will be no viable Palestinian state and no enduring peace; and be it further *Resolved*, That impact investing as a strategy for a just and sustained peace in Israel and Palestine is faithful to The Episcopal Church’s preference for a policy of engagement with both parties, rather than punitive methods towards one or the other; and be it further *Resolved*, That, as a component of this Church’s support for impact investing in the Palestinian territories, the General Convention directs the Economic Justice Loan Committee to consider an investment of at least \$500,000 to strengthen the economic infrastructure of the Palestinian territories.

EXPLANATION

While a political solution with the Israelis is necessary for the creation of an independent sovereign Palestinian State, the creation of a Palestinian State without sufficient nation building efforts will not be sustainable. Nation building efforts and a strong economy and infrastructure are prerequisites for Sustainable Peace and Stability.

The history of South Sudan is instructive. After more than two decades of war, South Sudan won independence from Sudan in 2011 following a referendum. The world's newest country, it relies on oil to survive, but inherited a shattered and neglected infrastructure. But since then South Sudan has been mired in war, chaos and a collapsing economy with 7 million people facing hunger and over 1 million South Sudanese on the brink of starvation. More than a million South Sudanese citizens have fled the country and are filling overcrowded refugee camps in surrounding nations. It’s one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. Sovereignty and political independence alone is not the answer for Palestine.

In response to a “Positive investment” resolution passed at the 2012 General Convention, The Episcopal Church purchased a three-year certificate of deposit for \$500,000 in the Bank of Palestine. While well-intentioned, this was not an impact investment. An investment, like a loan to a bank, without a strong and focused attempt to make real social impact will not help. Merely lending money to a bank will not build a country capable of sustaining itself.

Impact investments are investments made into companies, organizations, and funds with the intention to generate social and environmental impact alongside a financial return. This is taking place all over the world, and across all asset classes. Impact investing in Palestine would mean investing in specific Palestinian projects and ventures which would promote the development of a sound and functional Palestinian infrastructure and economy and/or promote peace and stability between Israelis and Palestinians through economic development.

There are many impact investment opportunities in Palestine, especially on the West Bank. One example is Sadara Ventures, a niche venture capital fund in Ramallah which has a focus on early-stage Palestinian tech startups. Sadara's investors include Cisco, the Google Foundation, the European Investment Fund and others. (<https://www.sadaravc.com/>) Such investments would increase the likelihood of a just peace agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and of equal importance, would greatly increase the likelihood of a successful Palestinian state, once an agreement is made. As Zahi Khouri, chairman of the National Beverage Company in Ramallah, whose focus is on developing the Palestinian economy, has said : "If you have two equal partners with a similar standard of living, you're very unlikely to have any conflict." (<https://www.ft.com/content/557df01a-a9cb-11e7-ab66-21cc87a2edde>).



Resolution Number: 2015-B013
Title: Reaffirm a Policy of Reconciliation and Restorative Justice in the Middle East
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That The 78th General Convention reaffirm the vocation of the Church as an agent of reconciliation and restorative justice, and recognize that meaningful reconciliation can help to engender sustainable, long-lasting peace and that such reconciliation must incorporate both political action and locally driven grassroots efforts; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention, lamenting the diplomatic and political stalemate following recent elections in Israel, reaffirm this Church's commitment to a just and peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a negotiated settlement between the parties resulting in two states for two peoples: a secure and universally recognized Israel living alongside a secure and viable state for the Palestinian people; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church commend the United States government for its efforts during the past triennium to broker negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, but express grave sorrow at the collapse of those negotiations in 2014 and the subsequent deterioration of political relations between the parties; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church, recognizing that simple calls for the parties to return to the negotiating table are no longer sufficient to address the urgency of the situation, challenge the United States government, in coordination with global partners, to develop and offer a new, comprehensive, and time-bound framework to the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority for the conclusive negotiation of a two-state peace agreement and the resolution of all final-status issues; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention urge all national governments represented in The Episcopal Church to invest substantial diplomatic capital in support of such a framework; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention urge the Presiding Bishop and the staff of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society to continue its exemplary work to enhance understanding, build political consensus, and organize grassroots support within The Episcopal Church for this political action; and be it further

Resolved, That Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society: (1) convene a collaborative group of experts and interfaith partners to collect a wide range of resources designed to inform and enliven a conversation among those holding differing convictions; (2) encourage early travel of the 27th Presiding Bishop to the Holy Land, in the spirit of interfaith fellowship, to establish and build relationships with leaders of the communities of the Children of Abraham working for peace, justice, and reconciliation; and (3) continue its commendable efforts to assist Episcopalians to learn about and understand the traumas, hurt, suffering, fears, pain, aspirations, and hopes that shape the daily lives of all living in Israel and the Palestinian Territories; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention commend the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society's investment of \$500,000 during the last triennium in the infrastructure of the Palestinian economy as a tangible step toward building a viable Palestinian state and strengthening the economic well-being of Palestinian communities; and to urge Domestic

and Foreign Missionary Society to expand this loan investment at least twofold in the next triennium; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage The Episcopal Church to (1) embrace the principles of restorative justice in its advocacy and engagement for the just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and (2) engage and support the voices of both Israelis and Palestinians — especially those who are themselves victims of violence and injustice—who seek peace with justice through nonviolent and restorative responses to the conflict; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention support existing efforts toward restorative justice by urging the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society to identify and find creative ways to commend, support, and elevate the work of local peace-building and economic development initiatives, including those of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East and grassroots organizations jointly led by Israelis and Palestinians; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$675,000 for the implementation of this resolution to be used as follows: (1) a total of \$60,000 over the course of the triennium to each of five existing local, grassroots peace-building initiatives jointly led by Israelis and Palestinians to support and expand their work; (2) \$300,000 to the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East to support and expand its sustainable peace-building efforts in Israel and the Palestinian Territories through its ministries of health care and education; and (3) \$75,000 to cover other costs associated with the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 913-915.



Resolution Number: 2012-B019
Title: Support Israeli-Palestinian Peace
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention express its regret at the lack of progress in negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians toward a just and peaceful resolution of the longstanding conflict between the two peoples, and call for the cessation of violence by all parties, and reaffirm this Church's commitment to a negotiated two-state solution in which a secure and universally recognized State of Israel lives alongside a free, viable, and secure state for the Palestinian people, with a shared Jerusalem as the capital of both; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention commend the leadership of the Presiding Bishop in calling all Episcopalians to advocacy for an end to the conflict and support for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the other Christian communities of the Holy Land, particularly through her 2011 Pastoral Letter on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (accessible on the website of The Episcopal Church); and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage all dioceses, as well as the Executive Council and the Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with Justice Concerns, to engage actively in the discipline of advocacy, education, and prayer for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the provision of humanitarian aid that promotes peace and reconciliation; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention affirm the importance of interfaith dialogue in the resolution of the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both in the Holy Land itself and in other contexts around the world; and decry religious extremism and fundamentalism in all their forms and the violence that arises from their expression; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention of The Episcopal Church affirm the truth that some mission is best enacted at the local level, and therefore urges all congregations to seek, over the next Triennium, to engage with local Jewish and Muslim congregations to study peace with justice in the Middle East, and urges that the narratives and theologies that inform the conversation on peace with justice in the Middle East be particular focuses of attention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops, the Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with Justice Concerns, the resources of the Episcopal seminaries, and the Advocacy and Networking Committee of the Executive Council be called upon the support, through the triennium, the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian study on peace with justice in the Middle East, and produce and annotated bibliography of resources to be posted on the website of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the triennial study groups on Middle East peace with justice prepare report sharing what they learned about a constructive path to peace with justice, and that these reports be collected and shared with the Church by the Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace with Justice Concerns; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop develop an interfaith model pilgrimage composed equally of Episcopalians, Jews, and Muslims in order to further encourage the travel of pilgrims

and witnesses to the Holy Land in order to experience the multiple narratives of the diverse peoples who call the land their home; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention affirm positive investment as a necessary means to create a sound economy and a sustainable infrastructure in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip because without these measures there can and will be no viable Palestinian state and no enduring peace; and be it further

Resolved, That in seeking to encourage such positive investment in the Palestinian territories, Episcopalians give priority to investment in the institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, which provide healthcare, education, and social services without discrimination on the basis of religion, political ideology, gender, socioeconomic standing, or national identity; and be it further

Resolved, That the work of the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Good Friday Offering be commended to all Episcopalians as faithful vehicles for providing economic and other support to the Diocese of Jerusalem and its institutions; and be it further

Resolved, That, as a component of this Church's support for positive financial investment in the Palestinian territories, the General Convention urge the Economic Justice Loan Committee to consider a loan of at least \$200,000 to strengthen the economic infrastructure of the Palestinian territories.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 221-222.



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: 2006-A013
Title: On the Topic of Investments in Support of an Economically Viable Palestine
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected [Resolution Died With Adjournment]
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 75th General Convention request Executive Council to consider investments in support of an economically viable Palestine.