

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

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-B021  
**TITLE:** Support Aid to Palestinian Refugees  
**PROPOSER:** The Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori  
**TOPIC:** Refugees

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2000-B016 Affirm Refugee Rights of Palestinians and Israelis  
1985-D135 Increase Support for Refugees in the Diocese of Jerusalem

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

2015-B013 Reaffirm a Policy of Reconciliation and Restorative Justice in the Middle East  
2012-B019 Support Israeli-Palestinian Peace

*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.*

# B021 Support Aid to Palestinian Refugees

<b>Proposer</b>	The Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Beisner, The Rt. Rev. Barry; Ihloff, The Rt. Rev. Robert
<b>Sponsored by</b>	
<b>Page numbers</b>	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
<b>HiA / Leg. Cttee</b>	/
<b>Current Status</b>	Pre-Filed Resolution
<b>Version</b>	Original (as filed)
<b>Review Status</b>	Not yet reviewed

## RESOLUTION TEXT

- Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 79th General Convention strongly call upon the United States Government to maintain its historic commitment to alleviating the poverty of Palestinians and restore its full planned 2018 funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) so that it can continue to serve the over 5 million Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria; and be it further
- Resolved*, That the 79th General Convention also strongly call upon the United States Government to lift its funding freeze on United States Agency for International Development (USAID) programs which aid Palestinians.

## EXPLANATION

UNRWA was created in 1949 to assist Palestinian refugees following the displacement from their homes in 1948 as a result of the Arab/Israeli war. In January 2018 the United States Government announced it would nearly halve the first installment of its pledged annual contribution to UNRWA, reducing that figure from \$125 million to \$60 million. Washington also mandated that none of the money could be used to support programs for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Syria. The United States subsequently blocked the distribution of an additional \$45 million in emergency food aid for Gaza and the West Bank.

The freeze on U.S. Government funding is having devastating effects on Palestinians, including the over 460,000 refugees impacted by the war in Syria. Among the UNRWA health care providers is the Episcopal Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, visited by our Presiding Bishop in April. Because of the U.S. Government cut in funds, UNRWA is now only able to provide a quarter of the standard reimbursement to the hospital for the patients it treats.

In an emergency appeal for funds in May, Archbishop Suheil Dawani wrote: “Our Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza (AAH) had been literally working around the clock to serve the wounded from the escalating violence in the Gaza Strip.”

The American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem reported: “We visited Ahli in April, before the worst of the violence. The living conditions are appalling. The work of the doctors and staff is truly heroic. Al Ahli Hospital is located in the one of the most volatile places on earth. It is the

oldest hospital in Gaza and the only remaining full-service independent hospital in Gaza. They welcome all, regardless of religious, ethnic or economic background and provide compassionate care to some of the neediest.”



**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:** 1985-D135  
**Title:** Increase Support for Refugees in the Diocese of Jerusalem  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Substituted and Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 68th General Convention call upon the whole Episcopal Church to:*  
**Continue and increase their support of the ministry and mission of the Anglican Province of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East through the use of the Good Friday Offering;**  
**Recognize continued support of the work of St. George's College, which is the Anglican Center in the Diocese of Jerusalem;**  
**Call upon the General Convention's Executive Council, working through the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief and other units of the Church, to increase ongoing commitment of human and material resources for the support of schools, hospitals, and institutions, ministering to displaced persons and refugees in these historic lands.**

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 268.