

GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-D039

TITLE: Regarding Occupation and Apartheid

PROPOSER: The Very Rev. Dr. Koshy Mathews

TOPIC: Middle East

Directly Related: (Attached)

- 2009-B027 On the Topic of Peace and Statehood in Historic Palestine (Rejected)
- 1994-D015 Reaffirm Support for Human Rights
- 1994-D065 Recognize Illegality of Israeli Settlements in Gaza and the West Bank
- 1991-A147 Support a Two-state Solution for Israel and the Palestinian People
- 1976-D070 Call for Efforts to Restore Freedom in Oppressive States

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

- 2003-D008 Urge Israel to End Policy of Demolition of Palestinian Homes
- 2000-B016 Affirm Refugee Rights of Palestinians and Israelis
- 1991-A149 Urge a Full Accounting of the Use of Foreign Aid in the Middle East
- 1991-D008 Urge a Peaceful Resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

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.

D039 Regarding Occupation and Apartheid

Proposer	The Very Rev. Dr. Koshy Mathews
Endorsed by	Hallanan, The Rev. Sunny; Smith, Mr. Newland
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	HD / 07 - Social Justice and International Policy
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church condemns laws and policies of the state of Israel that discriminate against Palestinian citizens of Israel and have inevitably led to the current state of apartheid, under which Jewish Israelis enjoy full civil and human rights while the civil and human rights of Palestinian citizens are diminished. The Convention directs the Office of Government Relations to inform US legislators and members of the Executive Branch of US government of our concern about these laws and to convey them to their counterparts in the Israeli government; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That the Convention condemns the system of military justice applied in the occupied Palestinian territories that subject Palestinians to detention without charges or counsel, detain minors without parental presence, deprive their right of peaceful assembly, and condones lethal violence against unarmed Palestinians without accountability; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the Convention calls upon the State of Israel to cease its denial of travel to Palestine and Israel by members of human rights organizations such as Jewish Voice for Peace who are committed to ending the conditions of apartheid in Israel and the occupied territories by bringing economic pressure to bear on Israel. The Convention supports the right of Palestinians to self-determination, freedom of movement, property rights, unrestricted access to water, electricity, medical care, primary and secondary education, economic opportunities, permission to build and retain homes, and commerce; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the Convention urges members of The Episcopal Church to pray, reflect and frankly and openly discuss whether the policies of the Israeli government toward Palestinians contribute to a state of militarization and apartheid, and whether such conditions are consistent with our Baptismal Covenant to struggle for human dignity and freedom for all people in the region.

EXPLANATION

The Episcopal Church has a strong history of advocacy on behalf of a just peace in Palestine and Israel, including calls upon members of the Episcopal Church to pray and work toward just peace, ending the occupation, and ending construction of Jewish-only settlements in the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The 71st General Convention of the Episcopal Church recognized that Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem are illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace (1994-Do65).

The 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirmed the right of Palestinians and Israelis to self-determination, independence, and sovereignty based in justice, peace, and security for the two peoples (2000-Bo16).

The 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church called upon Israel to secure the human rights of indigenous Arabs within Israel and Palestinian territories through a) ending the violation of civil and human rights; b) stopping the brutalities committed against individuals, families, and groups which now occur; c) restricting the use of military force to measures and practices proportionate to the situation and suited to the control of civilian populations; d) causing the State of Israel to discontinue the use of administrative detention and collective punishment; e) the permanent reopening of schools, universities, and other educational institutions for Palestinians in the occupied territories; f) causing the State of Israel to be even handed and fair in the recognition and enforcement of the rights and interests of Palestinians with respect to their personal safety, property rights, water rights, and rights of access to commercial markets; and g) reestablishing and safeguarding the City of Jerusalem as an inter-religious municipality in which full respect is accorded the rights and interests of Christians, Jews, and Muslims (1991-A147).

Apartheid is defined as a rigid policy of segregating and economically and politically oppressing a population and any system or practice that separates people according to color, ethnicity, caste, etc. (Dictionary.com)

The Episcopal Church expressed its opposition when such conditions of apartheid as described above existed in South Africa (1976-Do36).

The 68th General Convention of the Episcopal Church adopted a resolution calling for an unambiguous, coherent policy in opposition to apartheid in the Republic of South Africa (Do29 – 1985).

The Israeli government continues its oppression of Palestinians and suppression of those that support elimination of its system of apartheid, as recently demonstrated by its action to deny entry into Israel to individuals and organizations protesting its apartheid policies and laws.



Resolution Number: 2009-B027

Title: On the Topic of Peace and Statehood in Historic Palestine

Legislative Action Taken: Rejected

Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 76th General Convention, considering the Church's mission to promote peace for all God's people, warmly applaud the initiative of President Barack Obama and his Middle East envoy, George Mitchell, to bring stronger and more resolute American diplomatic leadership to the cause of peace between Israel and Palestine and to the Middle East; and be it further

Resolved, That we express our appreciation to Bishop Suheil Dawani and the Diocese of Jerusalem for their ongoing witness and dedication to reconciliation and peace; and be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention acknowledge the tragic histories of the Jewish and Palestinian peoples as victims of injustice, wars, dispersion and exile, the existential fear and insecurity this has created for both peoples, and the distress their conflict has caused throughout the Middle East; and be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention respect the profound commitment of Israelis and Palestinians to the land they regard as their homeland; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call upon Israelis and Palestinians to recognize one another's right to statehood, economic viability and security, and that all other nations do likewise; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call for the cessation of violence by all Palestinians and Israelis; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call on the Government of the United States of America to practice financial transparency in all of its aid to Palestinians and to Israel; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call for the end of the air, water and land blockade of the Gaza Strip thereby permitting free and uninhibited access for all humanitarian assistance, for educational, reconstruction and development materials and for ordinary trade; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call for the wall in whatever its form around and through Palestinian land to be brought down; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call for an end to the on-going confiscation of Palestinian land, demolition of housing and the displacement of people; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call for a just resolution for Palestinian refugees; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention call for the creation of a single, viable, sovereign Palestinian state, independent of the State of Israel, comprising all of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with each state controlling its own water rights, and with Jerusalem serving as capital of both Israel and Palestine, in order to encourage a comprehensive and enduring peace.



Resolution Number: 1994-D015

Title: Reaffirm Support for Human Rights

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended

Final Text:

Resolved, That the 71st General Convention commend to the National Council of Churches, which has requested dialogue with its member commissions on human rights as it prepares its own policy statement on this subject, the perspective contained in this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That this 71st General Convention reaffirm its support for human rights throughout the world and states its conviction that civil rights and political freedom are the universal bedrock of any meaningful scheme of human rights; and be it further

Resolved, That this 71st General Convention commend ecumenical and interfaith support for human rights as a moral imperative for Christians, growing out of the biblical understandings that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, that they are endowed by God with an inalienable dignity, and that they thereby possess a value that is prior to and not dependent upon the acknowledgment of such rights by a political entity; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention commend to the National Council of Churches, which has requested dialogue with its member communions on human rights as it prepares its own policy statement on that subject, the perspective contained in this resolution and its accompanying explanation; and be it further

Resolved, That this 71st General Convention encourage the President and the Secretary of State to take the initiative internationally in promoting the cause of human rights and in restoring the primary focus of human rights effort[s] to the civil rights and political freedoms that are the building blocks of decent and humane societies; and be it further

Resolved, That this 71st General Convention commend continuing dialogue, both within the churches and between other faith communities and their governments, on issues of human rights, especially those issues relevant to their own jurisdictions.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), pp. 183-84.



Resolution Number: 1994-D065
Title: Recognize Illegality of Israeli Settlements in Gaza and the West Bank
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 71st General Convention of the Episcopal Church recognize that Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem are illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace, and, therefore, calls upon the United States government:

to withhold funds equivalent to those used by Israel for any settlement activity; and to make those funds available to Israeli settlers leaving the occupied territories for resettlement in pre-1967 Israel and equally for Palestinians accepting the principles of compensation for their lands and homes in Israel;

and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention commends the brave leadership of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yassir Arafat for their bold steps towards peace.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 310.



Resolution Number: 1991-A147
Title: Support a Two-state Solution for Israel and the Palestinian People
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church supports the existence of Israel as a sovereign state, the democratic and humanitarian inspired homeland for displaced Jewish people, and calls upon the Government of the United States:

To assist in the creation of a Palestinian State, and,

To assist Israel to secure the human rights of indigenous Arabs within Israel through:

- a. ending the violation of civil and human rights and by stopping the brutalities committed against individual, families, and groups which now occur;
- b. restricting the use of military force to measures and practices proportionate to the situation and suited to the control of civilian populations, and, to that end, to assure that military personnel and units, before assignment to duty, be given proper training in riot control and the techniques and practices of control of civilian populations;
- c. causing the State of Israel to discontinue the use of administrative detention and collective punishment;
- d. the permanent reopening of schools, universities, and other educational institutions for the Palestinians in the occupied territories;
- e. causing the State of Israel to be even handed and fair in the recognition and enforcement of the rights and interests of the Palestinians with respect to their personal safety, property rights, water rights, and rights of access to commercial markets; and
- f. encouraging the opening of candid and patient communication between the representatives of the Palestinians and the State of Israel and between the Palestinian and the Israeli peoples; and
- g. reestablishing and safe-guarding the City of Jerusalem as inter-religious municipality in which full respect is accorded the rights and interests of Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 794.



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.