

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-D041
TITLE: Protecting Jerusalem
PROPOSER: The Rev. David C Wacaster
TOPIC: Middle East

Directly Related: (Attached)

2012-B019 Support Israeli-Palestinian Peace
2009-B027 On the Topic of Peace and Statehood in Historic Palestine (Rejected)
2006-A011 On the Topic of Peace Between Israel and Palestine (Rejected)
2003-D002 On the Topic of an International Peace Zone for the Jerusalem Area (Rejected)
1997-A107 Recognize Jerusalem as the Capital of Both Israel and Palestine
1985-B017 Oppose Moving the United States Embassy From Tel Aviv to Jerusalem
1979-D089 Express Thankfulness for Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty

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 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.

D041 Protecting Jerusalem

Proposer	The Rev. David C Wacaster
Endorsed by	Brown, Ms. Anne; Syler, The Rev. Gregory
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
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, in solidarity with the heads of the Christian communities in Jerusalem, condemn the unilateral action of the President of the United States to move the Embassy of the United States from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, deeming it a grave violation of International Law and longstanding international consensus; locating the Embassy in Jerusalem is damaging to the unique identity of Jerusalem as the holy city of the three Abrahamic faiths and is hostile to the Palestinian Christian and Muslim residents of the city; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That the General Convention assert its conviction that Jerusalem is a universal holy city with no privilege granted to any faith or secular tradition over another; that all holy places in the city must be equally protected and accessible to all adherents; and that the city's status as a community for all Christians, Muslims, and Jews must be honored; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That, because the General Convention deems the crisis facing Jerusalem a matter of urgent significance to the faith and heritage of every member of the Church, special efforts be made to apprise the members of the Church of the General Convention's foregoing resolves and to educate them as to the long-festering conflict that has brought the Holy City to this point; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the General Convention urge the House of Bishops to disseminate as soon as is practicable a Pastoral Letter explaining the prophetic nature of the position of the Church on the status of Jerusalem, and encouraging study, reflection and action on the part of all Episcopalians to support Jerusalem's prophetic identity as the Holy City of Peace.

EXPLANATION

Moving the US Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in May 2018 was an action in contradiction and opposition to 70 years of international practice and US policy. The Episcopal Church should add its voice to a near universal international disapproval of the move. Moreover, the Patriarchs and heads of Christian communities of Jerusalem unanimously objected to the move as an endorsement of the inevitable claim of sole sovereignty over the entirety of the City of Jerusalem, which would be inimical to the Christian and Muslim residents of the city. The Episcopal Church has always rejected unilateral assertion of Israel's claim to sovereignty over all of Jerusalem, including by

making formal statements of General Convention dating back to at least 1979, as well as in positions taken by Executive Council.

Further, moving the Embassy adds to the growing sense of endangerment and threatened displacement of non-Jewish residents of the city, already apparent in revocation of residency rights of thousands of Palestinians, appropriation of Palestinian homes, establishing additional Jewish-only settlements in the city, and frequent restriction of Muslim and Christian access to holy sites.

Since the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947, maintaining Jerusalem as an international city belonging to all faiths has been a lynchpin of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The move of the US Embassy and the aforementioned hostile actions by the state of Israel threaten that status and further reduce the already fragile prospects of a just and peaceful resolution.

An additional paramount concern is the damage that could be done to the prophetic character of Jerusalem as God's Holy City, the unique physical, social and spiritual expression of divine will for peace and harmony among all God's children - Jewish, Christian, Muslim and all others, including secular men and women.

Essential to making the resolution effective is that it be understood and embraced by Episcopalians generally as an issue of deep concern. To that end the Resolution urges the House of Bishops to issue a Pastoral Letter explaining the prophetic nature of the position of the Church on Jerusalem and encouraging study, reflection and action on the part of all Episcopalians to support Jerusalem's prophetic identity as the Holy City of Peace.



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: 2009-B027
Title: On the Topic of Peace and Statehood in Historic Palestine
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Final Text:

Resolution Rejected by Non-concurrence. See Legislative History for original text of resolution.

Citation:



Resolution Number: 2006-A011
Title: On the Topic of Peace Between Israel and Palestine
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Final Text:

Resolution died with adjournment. See Legislative History for original text of resolution.

Citation:



Resolution Number: 2003-D002
Title: On the Topic of an International Peace Zone for the Jerusalem Area
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Final Text:

Resolution Rejected. See Legislative History for original text of resolution.

Citation:



Resolution Number: 1997-A107
Title: Recognize Jerusalem as the Capital of Both Israel and Palestine
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 72nd General Convention recognize Jerusalem as the seat of the Abrahamic peoples, acknowledge the historic presence of Jews, Palestinian Christians and Muslims and affirm:

that Jerusalem should serve as the capital for two sovereign and independent states, Israel and Palestine;

the government of Israel should remove forthwith all roadblocks and obstacles preventing free access to Jerusalem for Palestinians;

the government of Israel should change its planning policies so that Palestinians have equal rights to build housing in Jerusalem and develop their institutions which have been restricted since 1967;

East Jerusalem, as an integral part of the occupied territories, should be included in all political arrangements relating to those territories, including self-determination, release of prisoners, right of return, and eventual sovereignty; and be it further

Resolved, That this convention urge the government of the United States to use its diplomatic and economic influence in support of the above and to demonstrate a firm commitment to justice for Palestinians as it does for the security of the State of Israel; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Israel, the President of the Palestinian Authority and appropriate members of the Congress of the United States.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 181.



Resolution Number: 1985-B017
Title: Oppose Moving the United States Embassy From Tel Aviv to Jerusalem
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 68th General Convention of the Episcopal Church express its opposition to the movement of the United States Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, except within the context of a broad resolution of Middle East problems, with the status of Jerusalem having been determined by negotiation and not by unilateral action by any one community, religion, race or nation.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 130.



Resolution Number: 1979-D089
Title: Express Thankfulness for Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 66th General Convention of the Episcopal Church notes with thankfulness the signing of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, that it affirms the right of Israel to exist as a free State within secure borders, and that it urges continued negotiations leading to an overall settlement and peaceful resolution of the issues and problems in the Middle East; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention expresses support for the opportunity to establish a free and independent Palestinian state which recognizes the State of Israel; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention recognizes the uniqueness of the city of Jerusalem and urges a solution which would guarantee free and secure access to the Holy City by people of all faiths; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention confirms our oneness in Christ with our fellow Christians in the Middle East, as we also affirm that we are engrafted in the vine of Israel; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention expresses our love, concern and prayers for all persons in the Middle East.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 1979* (New York: General Convention, 1980), p. C-105.