

From: Board of Missions Israel-Palestine Task Force
17 members: 15 present, 15 Yes and 0 No votes. March 30, 2009
Co-sponsored by the Board of Church and Society (via the Executive Committee)
4 members: 4 present, 4 Yes and 0 No votes. March 30, 2009
Contact Person: John Chamberlin
Financial Impact: None

AMMAN CALL RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2009 Session of the California-Nevada Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church:

1. Joins with members of the World Council of Churches to endorse the World Council of Churches "Amman Call," regarding Arab-Israeli peace, issued at the World Council of Churches' International Peace Conference, entitled "Christians Together for Peace and Justice in the Middle East," at Amman, Jordan, 18-20 June 2007, and keep other actions consistent with the Amman Call's recommendations(.)

Adopted in Plenary (Item 14, 2009 AC Journal p. 237) as amended with the following clause added to the above:

and we also endorse that the issue of Palestinian and Jewish refugees should be decided as part of a negotiated peace agreement between the parties in the conflict..

2. Urges United Methodists, including the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Board of Church and Society, to make the issue of Israel-Palestine a priority for peacemaking, justice, and mission purposes, and to support constituency education, advocacy, and direct relief efforts following the guidelines set forth in the "Amman Call" and *The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church*. .

The Amman Call

issued at WCC International Peace Conference

"Churches together for Peace and Justice in the Middle East"

Amman, Jordan, 18-20 June 2007

Amman imperatives:

1. Almost sixty years have passed since the Christian churches first spoke with one voice about Arab-Israeli peace. For the last forty years the Christian churches have called for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In the very place where Jesus Christ walked upon the earth, walls now separate families and the children of God - Christian, Muslim and Jew -- are imprisoned in a deepening cycle of violence, humiliation and despair. The Palestinian Christians from Gaza

to Jerusalem and to Nazareth, have called out to their brothers and sisters in Christ with this urgent plea: "Enough is enough. No more words without deeds. It is time for action."

2. We welcome the timely and prophetic statement of the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem. We affirm that "the Churches are part of the conflict, because the Churches cannot remain silent while there is still suffering. The role of the Churches is to heal and to bring all sides to reconciliation." Our belief in God reminds us "that all God's children of all religions and political parties are to be respected." We assure the Churches of Palestine and Israel of our prayers, collaboration and resources.

3. Thus, in Amman, Jordan 18-20 June 2007, days that have witnessed a deepening of the crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories, and also includes the United Nations World Refugee Day, we representatives of Christian churches and church-related organizations from every corner of the earth, affirm the decision of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and launch the "Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum" as an instrument to *"catalyze and coordinate new and existing church advocacy for peace, aimed at ending the illegal occupation in accordance with UN resolutions, and demonstrate its commitment to inter-religious action for peace and justice that serves all the peoples of the region."*

4. This action has been taken in response to three fundamental imperatives that call us to action:

- The ethical and theological imperative for a Just Peace
- The ecumenical imperative for unity in action
- The Gospel imperative for costly solidarity

5. The premises of this action are the following:

5.1. That UN resolutions are the basis for peace and the Geneva conventions are applicable to the rights and responsibilities of the affected people.

5.2. That Palestinians have the right of self-determination and the right of return.

5.3. That a two-state solution must be viable politically, geographically economically and socially.

5.4 That Jerusalem must be an open, accessible, inclusive and shared city for the two peoples and three religions.

5.5 That both Palestine and Israel have legitimate security needs.

5.6. That the Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories are illegal, and constitute an obstacle to peace.

5.7. That the "Separation Barrier" constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories is a grave breach of international law and must be removed from the occupied territory.

5.8. That there is no military solution for this conflict. Violence in all its forms cannot be justified whether perpetrated by Israelis or Palestinians.

5.9. That comprehensive regional peace is indivisible from a just peace in Israel and Palestine.

5.10. That the life and witness of local churches is at the center of worldwide church advocacy for a just peace.

6. We understand the mandate of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum to be a space where we will develop comprehensive strategic approaches to the two processes of peace making and peace building. An inclusive core group convened urgently by the WCC should be mandated to facilitate this and also ensure improved coordination between all actors. The core group will be informed by the reports of the working groups of the Amman conference, and that its composition and mechanism be designed and announced by the WCC.

7. Peace building will include the following:

7.1. Furthering theological and biblical perspectives and Christian education resources around those issues central to the conflict.

7.2. Developing strategies that will support the processes of justice and reconciliation, including inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.

7.3. Strengthening the churches' responses to the occupation.

7.4. Recognizing, encouraging and cooperating with all efforts of Israeli and Palestinian civil society that are in accord with the vision and goals of the PIEF.

8. Peace making will include the following:

8.1. Defining and promoting measures, including economic ones, that could help end the occupation and enhance sustainable growth and development.

8.2. Strengthening existing efforts and identifying new models of church solidarity in action. Supporting local churches and church related organizations not only to survive and continue their powerful ministries, including educational, health, cultural and social services, but also to thrive and be witnesses of hope.

8.3. Developing a long-term advocacy strategy in order to mobilize all of our constituencies and influence change.

Amman challenges:

9. We have heard the voices of the Christian churches of Palestine and Israel challenging and saying to us:

9.1. Act with us to liberate all peoples of this land from the logic of hatred, mutual rejection and death, so that they see in the other the face and dignity of God.

9.2. Pray with us in our efforts to resist evil in all of its guises.

9.3. Raise your voices along with ours as we speak "truth to power" and name with courage the injustices we see and experience. The illegal occupation has stolen two generations of lives in this tortured place, and threatens the next with hopelessness and rage.

9.4. Risk the curses and abuse that will be aimed at you and stand in solidarity with us and with our Palestinian brothers and sisters of all faiths as we defiantly reject the possibility that occupation will continue.

9.5. Help us to tear down walls and build and rebuild bridges among all peoples in the region. Extremism on all sides produces chaos. It threatens to divide us and to destroy bridges among peoples that would lead to reconciliation and peace.

9.6. Add your hope to ours in the knowledge that evil and despair have been overcome through the death of our Lord on the Cross and through His Resurrection.

9.7. Insist with us that all dispossessed peoples, all refugees, have the right to return.

9.8. Partner with us as we seek peace and pursue it. Peace is possible. Christians and Muslims and Jews have, can and will understand one another and live together as neighbors.

10. And we representatives of Christian churches and church-related organizations from every corner of the earth, we respond:

11. Yes, we will. Together we will act and pray and speak and work and risk reputations and lives to build with you bridges for an enduring peace among the peoples of this tortured and beautiful place –Palestine and Israel– to end these decades of injustice, humiliation and insecurity, to end the decades of living as refugees and under occupation. We will work with you to seek peace and pursue it. We have allowed too much time to pass. Time has not served the cause of peace but has served the cause of extremism. This is our urgent cause that cannot wait.