



# The United Church of Canada General Council

## GC27 The Middle East 1977 (1977M321)

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Notwithstanding many international efforts toward securing peace with justice in the Middle East and creating a better understanding of the issues, there has been no significant progress towards a just settlement of the problems in the Middle East since the General Council last met in 1974.

The Geneva Conference has not reconvened at the time of writing. The Arab States and the Palestinians continue to regard the Palestine Liberation Organization as the only legal representative of the Palestinians, and Israel remains adamant in its refusal to sit in a Conference with the PLO.

Since 1974, there have been three major developments related to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. There has been a vicious civil war in Lebanon which brought destruction and disaster to the whole country and worsened conditions for the Palestinian refugees.

2. A resolution was passed in the United Nations General Assembly labelling Zionism as a form of racism. This was supported by public opinion in the Third World and denounced in Canada and most of the Western world.
3. The Arab boycott of companies which trade with Israel has been stepped up and Israel has embarked upon a campaign in Europe and North America to get governments to take action against companies which are involved in the boycott.

BE IT RESOLVED that this General Council:

1. Request the Secretary of State for External Affairs to urge the reconvening of the Middle East Peace Conference in Geneva and to insist that the Palestinian people be represented at such a Conference. We further recommend that the Palestinian people be represented by the Palestinian Liberation Organization;
2. Continue to press the appropriate church and inter-church committees in our own Church and on an Inter-Church basis, seek for a wider understanding of the issues involved in the Middle East in order to contribute to a just and peaceful settlement;
3. Encourage the members of The United Church of Canada and the Churches' Committee on World Development, Service and Relief to continue and possibly increase its contributions for work among victims of the Middle East conflict; (Most of this support is channelled through the World Council of Churches to the Middle East Council of Churches.)
4. Support the Division of World Outreach and its Committee on Interfaith Dialogue in promoting dialogue with people of other faiths, and especially among Christians, Muslims and Jews.

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