



The United Church of Canada General Council

GC44 PM02 A Living Commitment to the KAIROS Palestine "Cry for Hope"

Document Date
February 13, 2022

1. What is the issue?

We believe God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is calling us to join in solidarity against the actions of the Government of Israel and join in sanctions.

2. Why is this issue important?

In July 2020, KAIROS Palestine issued a CRY FOR HOPE to the churches of the world. In order to stop the escalating violence affecting both Palestinians and Jewish Israelis, and to non-violently pursue peace and justice for all in the region, it is proposed that the United Church take seriously the calls to action of our partners.

Kairos Palestine is a coalition of Palestinian churches and Christian organizations. It issued the Cry for Hope document in July 2020 (summarized below) in response to the ongoing oppression of the Palestinian people. Cry for Hope calls on Christians and churches around the world to:

- a. Begin processes at all levels that recognize the urgent requirement for action
- b. Theological study - from the point of view of colonizer and colonized
- c. Affirm the right to resist and join in nonviolent resistance, using Boycott/Divest/Sanction as a framework for exerting pressure on Israel to comply with international law
- d. Demand governments employ political, diplomatic, and economic means to stop Israel's violations of human rights and international law
- e. Oppose anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, racism; work for justice
- f. Support interfaith and Israel Palestine partnerships that build mutual respect
- g. Encourage Come and See visits to Palestine and stand with grassroots initiatives for a just peace.

In previous years the United Church of Canada has passed many resolutions and proposals about Palestine and Israel. It has condemned violence in the region, and continues to do so.

In May 2021 we witnessed the impact of direct armed violence and indirect systemic violence on the people of Palestine and Israel. We saw the interconnectedness of suffering experienced by both peoples. In the 70's and the 80's Canada led the way in naming the South African situation as apartheid and taking strong action to hold the government of South Africa accountable. Now is the time to hold the state of Israel accountable for its persistent violations of international law including the 4th Geneva Convention.

As our church and country struggles to acknowledge and redress our own colonial history and the current day to day reality of people here we acknowledge our complicity in the illegal colonization of Palestine through direct support of the Government of Israel.

The Israeli Knesset, Supreme Court, military forces and settlers (illegal Israeli colonizers) are each involved in the continual dispossession of more and more Palestinians from their lands and homes, Every part of the Israeli establishment named above also supports, enables, encourages and participates in the illegal arrest, detention and assassination of Palestinians exercising their UN rights to protest and oppose the illegal occupation of their lands.

3. How might the General Council respond to the issue?

The General Council might affirm the recent declarations by various human rights groups that the actions of the Government of Israel conform to the definition of an apartheid state. (Kairos Palestine, B'tselem, Human Rights Watch and Independent Jewish Voices), and to join the international campaign of Boycott, Divest and Sanction against the Government of Israel until such time as it respects international law and the equal rights of all people living in Israel and Palestine

4. For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council:

Are there comments, affirmations, suggestions you would like to make with respect to this proposal? Is this proposal in response to a previous proposal, motion or action? If so, please name the previous action(s) and proposal number(s).

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