

Addressing Israeli Detention of Children

Resolution submitted to the United Methodist General Conference 2020 by UMKR and partners

Whereas thousands of Palestinian children, some as young as 12 years old, have been taken from homes and villages in their own land since 2000,¹ and

Whereas it has been independently documented that many of the children have been abused by the Israeli military or by settlers,² and

Whereas the children who are removed from their homes are taken to settlements or to interrogation sites, and sometimes into Israel which is a war crime according to the Fourth Geneva Convention,³ and

Whereas UNICEF has documented that the children are often held for an extended time with no lawyer and without the presence or even knowledge of their parents,⁴ and

Whereas the Social Principles of the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church explicitly affirms the rights of children,⁵ and

Whereas United Methodist Women have made the issues of incarceration of racial minorities and the well-being of children and young people as two of their priorities for the 2016-2020 quadrennium,⁶ and

Whereas the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by every member of the United Nations except the United States,⁷ and

Whereas in the previous quadrennium legislation has been introduced and reintroduced in the United States Congress that seeks to prevent the United States from financing Israel's military detention, interrogation, abuse, and ill-treatment of Palestinian children,⁸ and

Whereas the United Methodist baptismal covenant binds us to accept the freedom and power God gives us to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves,"⁹

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 2020 General Conference of the United Methodist Church charges the General Board of Church and Society, in consultation with the General Board of Global Ministries, and United Methodist Women, to formulate a plan that addresses:

- A. how best to educate and inform United Methodists around the issue of child incarceration;
- B. how best to interact with lawmakers and leaders around the world but particularly in the United States on the issue of child incarceration;
- C. possible actions United Methodists can take to avoid contributing to the suffering, abuse and imprisonment of Palestinian children.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that recommendations produced by the aforementioned consultation be brought to the 2024 General Conference of the United Methodist Church for review and/or action.

FOOTNOTES

1. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/children-behind-bars>
2. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-most-palestinian-minors-arrested-by-israel-claim-violence-during-detention-1.5456372> April 3, 2017

3. “Implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the occupied Palestinian territories: history of a multilateral process (1997-2001)” International Committee of the Red Cross March 3, 2002 <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/article/other/5fldpj.htm>
4. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-two-thirds-of-palestinian-minors-testify-to-abuse-in-israeli-detention-1.5629260> December 21, 2017; Children in Israeli Military Detention: Observations and Recommendations, March 6, 2013 https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_6_March_2013.pdf; and https://www.dci-palestine.org/without_enshrined_protections_children_under_israeli_military_arrest_face_rampant_abuses, September 18, 2018
5. ¶162C, The Book of Discipline 2016
6. <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/general-conference/issuepriorities2016-20.pdf>
7. https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._ratification_of_the_Convention_on_the_Rights_of_the_Child
8. *Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act* https://mccollum.house.gov/sites/mccollum.house.gov/files/documents/17.1107MCCOLL_005_xml.pdf AND https://mccollum.house.gov/sites/mccollum.house.gov/files/documents/MCCOLL_011_FINAL3_xml.pdf
9. United Methodist Hymnal, pg. 34