



The UMC General Conference 2020: Legislation & Resources on Israel/Palestine

LEGISLATION SUBMITTED BY UMKR & PARTNERS

The three resolutions that follow have been submitted to the 2020 United Methodist General Conference by UMKR, as well as by: Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA), the Executive Committee of the Love Your Neighbor Coalition (LYNC), and several regional task forces in the United States

ADDRESSING ISRAELI DETENTION OF CHILDREN

Summary: Every year, hundreds of Palestinian children are detained by Israeli military forces, taken out of occupied territory into Israel, interrogated without any adult to help them, and physically abused. This treatment of Palestinian children has been documented over decades by world-respected organizations.

The United States is the only member of the United Nations that has not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In recent years, legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Congress to prevent US military aid from financing Israeli military abuse of Palestinian children.

This resolution calls on the General Board of Church and Society (GBCS), in consultation with Global Ministries (GBGM) and United Methodist Women (UMW), to formulate recommendations for how United Methodists can take action on this issue, and in particular, how to advocate with lawmakers and leaders worldwide and especially in the United States.

(#20622; ADCA, Vol 2, Section 1, P. 285, Church and Society 3)

[See the full resolution and LEARN MORE on this subject](#)

CHILD INCARCERATION

Summary: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child mean little in many countries where children are imprisoned and abused.

In this resolution, the UMC formally endorses the application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as it relates to incarcerated children. The church charges GBCS, in consultation with GBGM and UMW, to formulate recommendations for United Methodists to engage in education and action on this important issue.

(#20597; ADCA, Vol 2, Section 1, P. 235, Church and Society 2)

[See the full resolution and LEARN MORE on this subject](#)



PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO PEACEFULLY ADDRESS INJUSTICE

Summary: Boycotts have been useful tools for social change, used by the UMC and other religious communities. Boycott campaigns are an expression of our political beliefs and are a protected form of speech in the US and many other nations. Today, that right to free speech is under attack. Laws are being adopted that would impose penalties on individuals and businesses for engaging in boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns that pertain to Israel or Israeli policies.

The United Methodist Church has called for a global ban on products from the Israeli settlements in occupied territory. Wespeth, the church's Board of Pensions, has put five Israeli banks on a 'No Buy' list, due to violations of Palestinians human rights (supporting the illegal Israeli settlements.)

In this resolution, the UMC "opposes any interference by any local, regional, or national government in our right to address injustice through nonviolent economic means." The church also urges all members and church bodies to contact local and national government leaders to advocate against this suppression of our rights. (#20613; ADCA, Vol 2, Section 1, P. 189, Church and Society 1)

[See the full resolution and LEARN MORE on this subject](#)



LEGISLATION SUBMITTED BY THE UMC GENERAL BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Endorsed and supported by UMKR

The United Methodist General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) has submitted two very important resolutions pertaining to Israel/Palestine to the 2020 General Conference. These resolutions uphold long-standing positions of the UMC that support a just and lasting peace in the Holy Land. Both are renewals – with a few amendments – of current UMC resolutions due to expire in 2020. (UMC General Conference resolutions expire after eight years unless renewed.)

OPPOSITION TO ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN PALESTINIAN LAND

Summary: This seminal resolution of the UMC is due to expire this year unless renewed by the General Conference. It describes the conditions of the Israeli occupation, and it states:

“The United Methodist Church opposes continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and also the Syrian Golan Heights, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian homes, the continued blockade of Gaza where over half the residents are children, the military detention of Palestinian children—often without trial—the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements, and any vision of a “Greater Israel” that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its surroundings.”

Actions that this resolution calls for include: a global ban on importing products from Israeli settlements, an end to all arms sales to the region and all arms purchases from there, a redistribution of the large military aid given to Israel and Egypt to fund humanitarian work such as UNRWA's, and all companies to stop any business activities that support ongoing military occupation. (#20554; ADCA, Vol 2, Section 1, P. 269, Church and Society 3)

[See the full resolution and LEARN MORE on this subject](#)



UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS ON THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

Summary: This resolution is another that would expire this year, if not renewed by the General Conference. It draws upon on the core principles of international law and U.N. resolutions as the basis for equality and just peace for all in Israel/Palestine.

In this resolution, the church calls upon “the United States and all permanent members of the UN Security Council, to accept the authority of Security Council resolutions, to refrain from vetoing resolutions, and abide by Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 2334, as well as all other relevant UN resolutions and International Court of Justice rulings, that provide a framework for bringing this conflict to a just and permanent end.” (#20553; ADCA, Vol 2, Section 1, P. 269, Church and Society 3) [See the full resolution and LEARN MORE on this subject](#)

OTHER LEGISLATION SUBMITTED BY UMKR

UMKR has submitted groundbreaking legislation to GC2020 with a resolution and a petition that make the moral and legal connections between Israel's occupation and illegal colonization of Palestinian territory and two other international situations that involve similarly egregious violations of international law and human rights. The proposed amendment to the UMC Book of Discipline would direct church investors to apply a consistent standard to our global investments, one that recognizes Israel is not alone in its violations of human rights through occupation and colonization.

EXCLUDE GOVERNMENT DEBT OF COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN PROLONGED MILITARY OCCUPATIONS

Summary: This resolution pertains to three prolonged military occupations that are in violation of international law: Turkey's occupation of Northern Cyprus, Morocco's occupation of Western Sahara, and Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory. All of these occupations involve illegal colonization of the occupied territory, all deny the occupied population their right to self-determination, and the United Nations has called for all three to end.

The resolution calls for United Methodist boards, agencies and investment managers to exclude investment in the government bonds of these three occupying powers. (#20539; ADCA, Vol 2, Section 1, P. 188, Church and Society 1)



Amend ¶717 in the UMC Book of Discipline: SUSTAINABLE AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT

Petition #20267 supports the above resolution. It calls for amendment of Paragraph 717 in the United Methodist Book of Discipline, which is titled **Sustainable and Socially Responsible Investment**. Paragraph 717 lays out some of the UMC's major investment policies. Petition #20267 would add the following text to that paragraph: "United Methodist institutions should similarly not hold sovereign or government debt in states conducting prolonged military occupations as they violate international law and human rights standards."

(#20267; ADCA, Vol 2, Section 2, P. 657, General Administration)

[See full text on our website and LEARN MORE on this subject](#)

NOTE: Wespeth's Alternate Petition to Amend Book of Discipline Paragraph 717 – **Petition 20266-GA**, ADCA Volume 2, Section 2, P 656-657, General Administration – offers similar language without specifying the prolonged military occupation, but it does encourage investors to engage with governments to create positive change and hold them accountable for their actions, while also excluding those who don't act responsibly. UMKR believes that engaging with a government is very likely to prove futile. We believe the church should not buy sovereign debt of countries acting irresponsibly. We prefer the more restrictive wording in **Petition 20267-GA**.

However, if either piece of legislation is adopted by the General Conference, UMKR will consider it to be a significant step forward for our denomination's global leadership in faith-based investing.

UMKR BROCHURE ON GC 2020 LEGISLATION ►

[Read it online and download it.](#)

