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Suggested Title: Sustainable and Socially Responsible Investments
Discipline Paragraph: Discipline ¶ 717
General Church Budget Implications: None
Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶ 717: In the investment of money, it shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, annual conferences, foundations, and local churches, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, governments, or funds with policies and practices that are socially responsible, consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles. All United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to seek investments in institutions, companies, corporations, governments, or funds that promote racial and gender justice, protect human rights, prevent the use of sweatshop or forced labor, avoid human suffering, and preserve the natural world, including mitigating the effects of climate change. In addition, United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to avoid investments in companies engaged in core business activities that are not aligned with the Social Principles through their direct or indirect involvement with the production of anti-personnel weapons and armaments (both nuclear and conventional weapons), alcoholic beverages or tobacco; or that are involved in privately operated correctional facilities, gambling, pornography or other forms of exploitative adult entertainment. 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. The boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions and actively exercise their responsibility as owners of the companies in which they invest. This includes engaging with companies to create positive change and hold them accountable for their actions, while also considering exclusion if companies fail to act responsibly.

Date:
Signature of the Petitioner:
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Rationale: When we buy sovereign debt (government bonds) we are lending our funds to governments without any formal mechanism for advocacy. Governments conducting prolonged military occupations are violating international law and human rights standards. Such investments are morally wrong and financially risky.