

Letter and Video of Support from 140 Israeli Citizens, 2012

See some of the signers of this letter in the accompanying video at www.kairosresponse.org, in the Endorsement Statements section

Dear United Methodist Friends,

We write to you as citizens and residents of Israel who support the United Methodist proposal to divest from companies involved with Israel's occupation. Understanding that a decision to divest may sound harsh at first and that quite a few misconceptions exist concerning this initiative, we would like to offer our view.

We understand that this is a decision about how the church will invest its own money, and we applaud the effort to make the church's actions consistent with its values. In view of this effort, we are asking you to support the Palestinian call for actions such as divestment from the Israeli occupation. We would like to stress that this form of divestment is far from being anti-Israeli or anti-Semitic. We support and encourage your resolution to divest from companies that profit from the Israeli Occupation. We are convinced that measures such as this do not target Israeli, Jewish or any other individuals, but companies which profit from Israel's military occupation and violations of human rights as stipulated in international law. We believe that the proposed United Methodist divestment resolution is therefore extremely responsible and worthy.

The effectiveness of the divestment campaign is undeniable. Some companies are actually moving out of the illegal settlements as global economic actions continue. Even the most mainstream Israeli commentators say that Israel must fundamentally change its ways, and that Israeli PR alone will no longer succeed in maintaining the brutal reality of Israel's discriminatory policies.

The continued violent oppression of the Palestinian people is a crime. The continued theft of land, water and natural resources from Palestinians is a crime. At the very least, we expect conscientious people and organizations not to take part in crime. We expect people of conscience not to carry on in a "business as usual" manner under these circumstances. When an organization finds out that it is invested in projects that profit from crime, the decent thing to do would be to disinvest from those projects.

The words of the Kairos Palestine Document, supported by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and others who stand for justice, stress the depth and moral conviction of your call. We hope and trust that the universal principles concerning human rights will guide you towards an action of solidarity with Palestinians who share your faith and all other Palestinians. We strongly believe that divestment is a positive action that will pressure Israeli and international policy makers to end the occupation, and strengthens those aspiring and working for justice and peace in the region.

Sincerely,

(see the signatories on the following page)

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24. Dr. Ellen Chaikin, Jerusalem
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26. Ron Cohen
27. Maayan Dak
28. Dr. Uri Davis
29. Ruth Edmonds
30. Shiri Eisner
31. Ofer Engel
32. Hamutal Erato
33. Lina Falah
34. Naama Farjoun
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36. Tamar Freed
37. Hagar Garti
38. Avner Gilaad
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40. Neta Golan
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42. Dina Goor
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47. Noam Gur
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135. Elian Weizman
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