

ADDRESSING ISRAELI DETENTION OF CHILDREN

Submitted by the New England Conference to the UMC General Conference

Whereas thousands of Palestinian children (defined by both sides as those under 18 and some are as young as 12 years old) have been taken from homes and villages in their own land since 2000

(<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/children-behind-bars>), and

Whereas it has been independently documented that many of the children have been abused by the Israeli military or by settlers ([https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium.MAGAZINE-most-palestinian-minors-arrested-by-israel-claim-violence-during-detention-1.5456372](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium/MAGAZINE-most-palestinian-minors-arrested-by-israel-claim-violence-during-detention-1.5456372) April 3, 2017), 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

("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>), 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 (<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, February 2015; <https://www.unicef.org/sop/reports/children-israeli-military-detention>; <https://www.dci-palestine.org/without-enshrined-protections-children-under-israeli-military-arrest-face-rampant-abuses>, September 18, 2018), and

Whereas the Social Principles of the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church explicitly affirms the rights of children (¶162C, The United Methodist Book of Discipline 2016), 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

Whereas in the previous six years 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

(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; https://mccollum.house.gov/sites/mccollum.house.gov/files/documents/MCCOLL_011_FINAL3_xml.pdf; <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2590>; <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2407>; <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4391>), 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,”

(United Methodist Hymnal, pg. 34)

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2024 General Conference of The United Methodist Church calls on the U.S. government to adopt legislation preventing the United States from financing Israel’s military detention, interrogation, abuse, and ill-treatment of Palestinian children, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2024 General Conference of The United Methodist Church calls on the Senate and President of the United States to proceed with ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.