

## **Action of the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2006) regarding Israel/Palestine**

**The Assembly rejected two attempts to amend the recommendation and then adopted the Committee's recommendation to answer this item (11-01) with the following alternate resolution and with comment (by a vote of 483/28/1).**

On Item 11-01, the Peacemaking and International Issues Committee voted as follows (Motion was carried by a Counted vote.):

- Affirmative:53
- Negative:6
- Abstention:3

The committee hereby recommends in response to this recommendation, that the 217th General Assembly (2006) approve the following alternate resolution and comment:

**After careful consideration of the overtures brought before the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues of the 217th General Assembly (2006), we offer the following recommendations.**

- 1. We acknowledge that the actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) caused hurt and misunderstanding among many members of the Jewish community and within our Presbyterian communion. We are grieved by the pain that this has caused, accept responsibility for the flaws in our process, and ask for a new season of mutual understanding and dialogue.**

**To these ends, we replace the instructions expressed in Item 12-01 (Minutes, 2004 Part I, pp. 64–66) Recommendation 7, which reads**

**“7. Refers to Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) with instructions to initiate a process of phased selective divestment in multinational corporations operating in Israel, in accordance to General Assembly policy on social investing, and to make appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly Council for action.”**

**with the following:**

**“7. To urge that financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investments of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal.”**

- 2. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to ensure that its strategies for engaging corporations with regard to Israeli and Palestinian territories**
  - a. Reflect the application of fundamental principles of justice and peace common to Christianity, Islam, and Judaism that are appropriate to the practical realities of Israeli and Palestinian societies.**
  - b. Reflect commitment to positive outcomes.**
  - c. Reflect awareness of potential impact upon the stability, future viability, and prosperity of both the Israeli and Palestinian economies.**
  - d. Identify affirmative investment opportunities as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank.**
  
- 3. We call upon the church:**
  - a. To work through peaceful means with American and Israeli Jewish, American and Palestinian Muslim, and Palestinian Christian communities and their affiliated organizations for an end to all violence and terror against Palestinian and Israeli civilians.**
  - b. To work through peaceful means with American and Israeli Jewish, American and Palestinian Muslim, and Palestinian Christian communities and their affiliated organizations to end the occupation.**
  - c. To work through peaceful means with American and Israeli Jewish, American and Palestinian Muslim, and Palestinian Christian communities and their affiliated organizations towards the creation of a socially, economically, geographically, and politically viable and secure Palestinian state, alongside an equally viable and secure Israeli state, both of which have a right to exist.**
  - d. To encourage and celebrate efforts by individual Presbyterians, congregations, and judicatories of our church to communicate directly and regularly with Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities, sponsor programs likely to improve relations among Christians, Jews, and Muslims, and engage in peacemaking in the Middle East.**
  
- 4. The 217th General Assembly (2006) does not believe that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should tell a sovereign nation whether it can protect its borders or handle matters of national defense. The problem with the security wall, in 2004 and presently, is its location. The 217th General Assembly (2006) supports fair criticism of the security wall insofar as it illegally encroaches into the Palestinian territory and fails to follow the legally recognized borders of Israel since 1967 demarcated by the Green Line.**
  
- 5. Recognizing that the situation on the ground in the Israel-Palestine area is rapidly changing, the General Assembly Council (GAC) is directed to carefully monitor ongoing developments of the situation in the Middle East and to**

**examine the policies of the PC(USA) related to the Middle East, in order to make a comprehensive report to the 218th General Assembly (2008).**

- 6. Instructs the Stated Clerk to communicate Recommendations 1. through 5. above to the United States' president, vice president, secretary of state, and members of Congress; to Israeli and Palestinian leaders in the Middle East; to the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); to leadership of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faith bodies and denominations in the United States and the Middle East with whom we are in communication.**

***Comment: The Assembly received twenty-six overtures pertaining to the Middle East. The recommendation is the result of the General Assembly's honest and sincere effort to address the issues and concerns that appeared in the overtures in a comprehensive and concise document.***