

1 **Document: 700.04**

2 **Name: Resolution to Support the Call to Boycott Chevron**

3 **Author(s): Methodist Federation for Social Action, Elisa Gatz, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, co-chairs,**
4 **and Paula Roderick, Broadway UMC**

5 **CCFA Action:**

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8 **ACTION:**
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10 The Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church supports the call to support the
11 Chevron Boycott that has been proposed and adopted by UM General Board of Church and Society at its
12 March 2025 board meeting. United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR) and the Methodist
13 Federation for Social Action (MFSA) also have joined the call to boycott Chevron. Chevron supplies
14 Israel's war machine with energy via the operation and co-ownership of the major gas fields off the coast
15 of colonized Palestinian land. Both Chevron and Israel enrich themselves from these projects – continuing
16 a pattern of ongoing violence and apartheid. We are proud to join the growing international call to
17 respond to the call from Palestinian civil society and urge church members, organizations and
18 congregations to sign onto the global boycott on UMKR's website. The American Friends Service
19 provides additional background and supporting reasons for how to support this call to boycott "everything
20 Chevron," including its affiliates.

21
22 Palestinians deserve full human rights. Despite the ceasefire in Gaza (which Israel broke again in March
23 2025), the destruction of Palestinian homes, businesses, water reservoirs, and olive trees continues in the
24 West Bank and elsewhere. Chevron's alliance with the Israeli government helps support this destruction.
25 The boycott is designed to break that alliance by applying financial disincentives and negative publicity
26 for Chevron. If Chevron pulls out of its alliance with Israel, the Israeli government may be pressured into
27 conforming with international law in protecting the human rights of Palestinians.

28
29 NIC calls on our Conference to support the GBCS resolution to join ongoing global campaign to boycott
30 Chevron products, to sign the UMKR petition calling for a Chevron boycott, available on UMKR's
31 website, and to support the efforts of our faith leaders to join in this boycott and educate our members
32 about crucial importance of such non violent resistance means such as this boycott.

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34 **RATIONALE:**
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36 Individually, it may appear that one person cannot have much of an effect in addressing the atrocities
37 being committed against Palestinians. But, when we join forces in a boycott, our united voice can have a
38 genuine impact as evidenced by boycotts of decades past: the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Nestle
39 Boycott, the Grape Boycott, and the Anti-Apartheid Boycott of South Africa. Link to the UMKR Petition
40 is available on UMKR's website, <https://umkr.salsalabs.org/chevron-stopfuelinggenocide/index.html>.¹
41

¹ Last year, NIC observed "[S]ince 2009, no fewer than six authoritative studies have declared Israeli actions as creating an apartheid condition as defined by international law that describes apartheid as a "crime against humanity." NIC Resolution: Condemning Apartheid in Palestine and Israel.

1 NIC and GC² has supported various opportunities to engage in boycott, divestment, and sanctions, to
2 promote the rights of all people living in Israel and Palestine, and to vigorously defend the right to engage
3 in nonviolent protest.³
4

5 Chevron⁴ is co-owner of gas fields in occupied Palestinian land. It also operates the pipeline between
6 Israel and Egypt. Chevron currently supports the Israeli government and its devastation of Gaza.
7

8 Palestinians, including the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, have asked for the boycott.
9 They want to pressure Chevron to divest from its holdings in Israel. Conditions in Gaza have only
10 become worse.⁵ After pressure from social justice activists, in 2022, Chevron pulled out of Myanmar,
11 citing its human rights abuses. A boycott of Chevron could persuade Chevron to end its operations in
12 Palestine.⁶ Chevron is a key participant in the Israeli economy; it's withdrawal would be a potent
13 message against Israel's settler colonialism.
14

15 In the NIC Resources for Putting Faith into Action, NI Church and Society proclaims "United Methodists,
16 rooted in the teachings of Jesus and the prophets, have a long history of speaking out against injustice."
17

² The GBCS resolution states "In support of its commitment to human rights, peace, and international law, the board resolved to join an ongoing global campaign to boycott Chevron products," and "We stand in solidarity with the United Methodist Kairos Response, and other United Methodists in this boycott campaign, until the company terminates all contracts with Israel that allow it to profit from the military occupation of Palestine and ceases operations in the gas fields off the coast of Palestine/Israel." GBCS notes: "Chevron Corporation is an American multinational energy company specializing in oil and gas. The company operates natural gas extraction and pipelines off the coast of Palestine/Israel, making it a significant partner in the military blockade of Gaza and the exploitation of Palestinian land and resources."

³ For example, in 2023, NIC passed; Supporting the Right to Free Speech and to Engage in Nonviolent Actions Including Boycotts. In 2019, NIC called on Wespeth to divest from Israeli bonds; and action that the denomination took in 2024. And in 2024, UMs continued to affirm our support as a denomination of the Palestinian call for boycott divestment and sanctions in passing a resolution calling for divestment of bonds of countries engaged in prolonged military occupation, including Israel, and re-adopting our longstanding resolution calling for a global boycott of settlement products.

⁴ UMKR wrote to Michael K. Wirth, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Chevron, asking Chevron to end "such contracts and operations ... and advising him that if Chevron did so, then UMKR would end its call for this boycott. To date, Chevron has not responded.
https://www.kairosresponse.org/chevronboycott_umkrletter.html

⁵ Towards the end of this Ramadan season,, Israel again broke the fragile ceasefire with an attack that left over 400 people dead, many of them children. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/18/why-did-israel-break-the-ceasefire-in-gaza> What will happen in Gaza by the time this resolution is before our annual conference remains to be seen.

⁶ Links to resources here: website (<https://umkr.salsalabs.org/chevron-stopfuelinggenocide/index.html>). The American Friends Service Committee (<https://afsc.org/BoycottChevron>).

1 **Document: 700.05**

2 **Name: Opposition to Unjust Theologies: Challenging Religious Nationalism**

3 **Author(s): Methodist Federation for Social Action, Elisa Gatz, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, co-chairs;**

4 **Paula Roderick, member Broadway UMC**

5 **CCFA Action:**

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8 **ACTION:**

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10 The Northern Illinois Conference recognizes the challenges that the rise in religious nationalism - the
11 dangerous conflation of religion and nationalism used to demean and deny the humanity of other people -
12 increasing hate crimes, vitriolic exchanges, and distorted theologies that have endangered our
13 communities. NIC denounces religious nationalisms in all its forms as a distortion of the Christian faith,
14 and commits to opposing it wherever it appears, for the sake of the gospel and the good of our human
15 family.

16
17 We encourage our pastors and lay leaders to promote conference-wide educational programs that address
18 the serious and harmful effects of religious nationalism, to support the work of organizations such as The
19 Religious Nationalisms Project to bring ongoing awareness of the religious nationalism to congregations,
20 to promote mentorship and support for leaders to work with diverse communities that may be affected by
21 the harm of religious nationalism. NIC encourages faith leaders to study and share within their
22 congregations the NIC “Resources for Putting Faith Into Action,” particularly those sections on how to
23 have courageous conversations and on denouncing Christian Nationalism and General Board of Church
24 and Society, Faith & Facts, Christian Nationalism.

25
26 We encourage NIC UM faith leaders to reach out to and work with members of different communities to
27 ensure that our neighbors of all faiths know our NIC churches are supportive, aware of the dangers they
28 may be experiencing, or indeed the harm that some Christians may even be causing. We encourage our
29 conference to form a task force or discussion group to explore and identify the biblical and theological
30 reasons some Christians have offered in justification of Christian Zionism and Christian Nationalism.

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32 **RATIONALE:**

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34 As the National Council on Churches stated “While upholding the positive role of religions in civic
35 society, [our] statement on Religious Nationalism addresses the dangerous conflation of religious belief
36 and violent or exclusionary nationalism which continues to beleaguer and undermine many societies.
37 [T]he misuse of religious traditions to exclude or harm whole segments of populations damages societies
38 and obscures the positive contribution of religion. Religious Nationalism is here understood as any
39 merging of a religious tradition, political outlook, and national loyalty that brings harm to those with
40 different religious commitments...”¹

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¹ Source: The Problem of Religious Nationalism, in the US and Globally: A Policy Statement of the National Council of Churches, Adopted October 18, 2024.

1 Christian Nationalism “is defined as a political ideology that seeks to merge Christianity and a particular
2 type of American identity, distorting both the Christian faith and the United States constitution.
3 According to Christians Against Christian Nationalism “it often overlaps and provides cover for white
4 supremacy and racial subjugation”... For years, many U.S. faith leaders have warned about the dangers of
5 blending faith and nationalism as a threat to religious freedom and to the separation of church and state as
6 outlined by the U.S. Constitution...”² In 2022, NIC called on members to “Overcome Christian
7 Nationalism,” utilizing resources such as Christians Against Christian Nationalism,
8 <https://www.christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org/statement>.

10 There is a growing awareness in understanding Christian Zionism and Zionism. In 2022, NIC passed the
11 “Opposition to Unjust Theology Regarding the Holy Land,” declaring its opposition to any theology or
12 biblical interpretation that would justify denying or violating the human rights of Palestinians and other
13 religious and ethnic minorities in Israel/Palestine.” The resolution stated that “Christian zionism is
14 having a significant and dangerous impact on U.S. policy regarding Israel...” Other UM annual
15 conferences have adopted similar resolutions.³ GBCS urged UMs to become more aware of the dangers
16 of Christian Zionism and the work with which many interfaith groups are engaging.⁴

18 Last year, at General Conference, United Methodists took the bold step to address Hindu nationalism.
19 “Not to be confused with the peaceful practice of Hinduism, Hindu nationalism is a relatively recent
20 ideology first conceived by leaders seeking to import European fascist ([https://forsea.co/how-fascism-](https://forsea.co/how-fascism-nazism-influenced-hindu-nationalism/)
21 [nazism-influenced-hindu-nationalism/](https://forsea.co/how-fascism-nazism-influenced-hindu-nationalism/)) concepts of racial purity into India. With the ascent of India’s
22 current prime minister, Narendra Modi, and his political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, Hindu
23 nationalism has become India’s unofficial ideology, with Modi and BJP-ruled states passing numerous
24 laws to criminalize (<https://www.uscifr.gov/publications/indias-state-level-anti-conversion-laws>),
25 marginalize (<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/world/asia/india-hijab-ban-schools.html>) and
26 demonize the practice of other faiths, particularly Islam and Christianity. As the second-largest Protestant
27 denomination in the United States, with over 5 million members domestically and 10 million
28 internationally, the UMC’s vote constitutes a timely and urgent response.” Source: “Why the UMC took
29 a historic stand and condemned Hindu nationalism,” Religious News Service, May 24, 2024, Neal
30 Christie.

32 As Christians we know, “scripture is consistent in the call for followers of Christ to love our enemies
33 (Matthew 5:44-45a), forgive others their trespasses (Matthew 6:14-15), to overcome evil with good
34 (Romans 12:21), and to seek peace and pursue it (Psalm 34:14).

² As our Book of Discipline provides “Separation of church and state means no organized union of the two, but it does permit interaction.” UM Book of Discipline, Par. 164.

³ 2024 East Ohio Annual Conference, “Opposition to Unjust Theology Regarding the Holy Land” which observed “Christian Zionism is having a significant and dangerous impact on U. S. policy regarding Israel, by obstructing efforts to achieve a just peace and promoting U.S. acceptance of unjust treatment of Palestinians...”

⁴ See, Interfaith Groups Call Out Dangerous Ideology of Christian Zionism, Colleen Moore, August 6, 2024