

1 **Document: 700.01**

2 **Name: Advocating for the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under**  
3 **Israeli Military Occupation**

4 **Authors: United Methodists for Kairos Response, Paula Roderick; NIC Church and Society,**  
5 **Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN Alka Lyall,**  
6 **Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators**

7

8 **Action:**

9 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church joins the United Methodist  
10 General Board of Church and Society, as well as numerous other Christian denominations and  
11 organizations, in endorsing H.R. 2590, Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children  
12 and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act; and

13

14 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church

- 15 • calls upon all clergy and laity of the Conference to educate themselves about the plight  
16 of Palestinian children and families living under Israeli military occupation and the  
17 reasons for Christians to oppose U.S. funds being used to detain, torture, and imprison  
18 Palestinian children in military detention, to subject Palestinian families to widespread  
19 home evictions and demolitions, and to annex Palestinian territory; and
- 20 • encourages all clergy and laity of the Conference to write, call, or meet with their  
21 legislators in Congress, to urge their Representative to co-sponsor H. R. 2590 and to urge  
22 their Senators to introduce, co-sponsor, and support a companion bill to H. R. 2590; and,
- 23 • directs the Conference Secretary to write to all legislators representing the region of the  
24 Conference in the U.S. Congress, informing them that the Conference has endorsed H.R.  
25 2590 and that the Conference urges them to co-sponsor and support H.R. 2590 in the  
26 House of Representatives or to introduce, co-sponsor, and support a companion bill in  
27 the Senate. A full copy of this resolution should be provided with that correspondence.

28

29 **Rationale:**

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31 In April 2021, Rep. Betty McCollum (MN-4) legislation to the U.S. Congress: H.R. 2590, the  
32 Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military  
33 Occupation Act.<sup>1</sup>

34

35 The United Methodist General Board of Church and Society has joined over 170 human rights  
36 and faith-based organizations in endorsing H.R. 2590.

37

38 This bill “seeks to promote justice, equality and human rights for Palestinian children and  
39 families by prohibiting Israeli authorities from using U.S. taxpayer funds to detain and torture  
40 Palestinian children, demolish and seize Palestinian homes, and further annex Palestinian Land  
41 in the occupied West Bank,” in violation of international law.

42

43 Israel is the only country in the world that systematically prosecutes children in military courts,  
44 where each year approximately 700 Palestinian children enter the abusive Israeli military  
45 detention system that a UNICEF report has described as “widespread, systemic, and  
46 institutionalized”, where children as young as twelve have been subjected to arrest and

1 imprisonment, are often held and interrogated for hours or days with no attorney and without  
2 the presence or knowledge of their parents, and where a large majority of these children report  
3 severe physical and emotional abuse during their detention. <sup>3</sup>

4  
5 United Methodists have repeatedly adopted resolutions and endorsed measures to protect the  
6 rights of Palestinian children, at both the general church and annual Conference levels.

7  
8 1. The bill, H.R. 2590: Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living  
9 Under Israel Occupation Act

10 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2590/>

11 3. Defense for Children International–Palestine (DCIP) No Way To Treat A Child campaign:

12 <http://nwtac.dci-palestine.org;>

13 3. United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR) resource: Palestinian Children & the Israeli  
14 Occupation: [https://www.kairosresponse.org/quick\\_facts\\_series.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/quick_facts_series.html)

1 **Document: 700.08**

2 **Name: Identifying and Opposing Apartheid in the Holy Land**

3 **Authors: United Methodists for Kairos Response, Paula Roderick; NIC Church and Society,**  
 4 **Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN Alka Lyall,**  
 5 **Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators**

6 **Action:**

7 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church affirms that apartheid is  
 8 antithetical to the Gospel message and that we recognize and oppose Israeli apartheid as we  
 9 strive to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves," and  
 10

11 The Conference calls on the U.S. government to condition U.S. funding to Israel upon Israel's  
 12 willingness to dismantle its apartheid system and implement all the rights due to Palestinians  
 13 under international law, and  
 14

15 The Conference urges all United Methodist clergy and laity to listen to the voices of Palestinians  
 16 regarding their situation, by meeting with them in their homeland, by seeking opportunities to  
 17 hear from them at online events, and through the study of the Palestinian Christians 'landmark  
 18 2020 document entitled "Cry for Hope: A Call for Decisive Action."  
 19

20 **Rationale:**

21 In most of the region between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, Israel is the sole  
 22 governing power, and, in the remainder, Israel maintains primary control over Palestinians'  
 23 lives. Israeli authorities have demonstrated a clear intent to maintain domination over  
 24 Palestinians by enacting a system of laws and policies that grant full self-determination  
 25 exclusively to Jewish Israelis and enforce systematic oppression of Palestinians, which is the  
 26 essence of an apartheid system.  
 27

28 Apartheid is named as a "crime against humanity" under international law and the primary  
 29 features of apartheid include:

- 30 • codifying into law a preferred group of people and giving that group preferential
- 31 access to resources, benefits and services,
- 32 • segregating the population into geographic areas based on identity, and
- 33 • establishing laws and policies designed to suppress opposition to the regime and
- 34 enforcing domination through arbitrary imprisonment, torture, cruel and inhumane
- 35 treatment, and other violations of human rights.  
 36

37 Israel has seized more than three-quarters of the land of its Palestinian citizens and continues  
 38 their dispossession today, and Palestinians in the OPT have lived under Israeli military law for  
 39 generations without any protected civil rights.

40 If apartheid is to be opposed and abolished, it is essential for the international community to  
 41 recognize and name apartheid where it exists. The Social Principles of The United Methodist  
 42 Church state that United Methodists "commend and encourage the self-awareness of all racial  
 43 and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them to demand their just and equal rights  
 44 as members of society," and furthermore "call the Church to challenge any hierarchy of cultures  
 45 or identities."  
 46

1 **Document: 700.10**

2 **Name: Opposition to Unjust Theology Regarding the Holy Land**

3 **Authors: United Methodists for Kairos Response, Paula Roderick; NIC Church and Society,**  
 4 **Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN Alka Lyall,**  
 5 **Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators**

6

7 **Action:**

8 The Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church declares its opposition to any  
 9 theology or biblical interpretation that would justify denying or violating the human rights of  
 10 Palestinians and other religious and ethnic minorities in Israel/Palestine.

11 The Northern Illinois Conference calls on its bishop to establish a task force to explore and  
 12 identify the biblical and theological reasons for opposing Israel's treatment of the Palestinian  
 13 people and to submit a report to the 2023 annual conference session which shall include  
 14 recommendations for actions the Conference should take in light of those findings.

15 **Rationale:**

16 Many Christians adhere to the theology of Christian Zionism, believing that the modern state of  
 17 Israel is a continuation of biblical Israel and a fulfillment of biblical prophecy and that "it is the  
 18 responsibility of Christians to support the State of Israel and its policies."<sup>1</sup>

19 The New Testament does not prophesy a modern Israeli state controlled by any single group of  
 20 people, but does envision a time when Christ will have eliminated "the dividing wall of  
 21 hostility" between Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 2:14).

22 A statement endorsed by thirteen bishops and patriarchs of Palestinian Christian churches says  
 23 that Western Christians have attached "biblical and theological legitimacy to the infringement of  
 24 our rights" and calls on their fellow Christians to "deepen their reflection on the Word of God  
 25 and to rectify their interpretations" and avoid "any use of the Bible to legitimize or support  
 26 political options and positions that are based upon injustice."<sup>2</sup>

27 For decades, the United Methodist Church has opposed Israel's treatment of the Palestinian  
 28 people, including: "the continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East  
 29 Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of  
 30 Palestinian homes, the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements, and any vision of a  
 31 'Greater Israel' that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its  
 32 surroundings."<sup>3</sup>

33 Christian Zionism is having a significant and dangerous impact on U.S. policy regarding Israel,  
 34 by obstructing efforts to achieve a just peace and promoting U.S. acceptance of unjust treatment  
 35 of Palestinians, and the Israeli government is increasingly reliant on Christians in the United  
 36 States who adhere to this theology for political support.<sup>4</sup>

37

38

39 1. [www.christianzionism.org](http://www.christianzionism.org)

- 1 2. The Kairos Palestine Document - Paragraphs 2.3.3 and 2.4
- 2 [https://www.kairosresponse.org/kairos\\_palestine\\_document.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/kairos_palestine_document.html)
- 3 3. Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land, UMC Book of Resolutions 2016, #6111
- 4 [https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/social-principles-and-resolutions/opposition-to-](https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/social-principles-and-resolutions/opposition-to-israeli-settlements-in-palestinian-land-6111)
- 5 [israeli-settlements-in-palestinian-land-6111](https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/social-principles-and-resolutions/opposition-to-israeli-settlements-in-palestinian-land-6111)
- 6 4. Christian Zionism and the Formation of Foreign Policy
- 7 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24915906>

1 **Document: 700.13**

2 **Name: Resolution for Korea's Peace**

3 **Author(s): Hwa-Young Chong**

4

5 **Action:**

- 6 1. The Northern Illinois Annual Conference pray for Korea's peace as part of worship,  
7 Bible Study, or special presentation during the 184<sup>th</sup> annual conference in 2023 on the  
8 occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the armistice of the Korean War.
- 9 2. The Bishop of the Northern Illinois Conference appoint a committee to work on this  
10 prayer time during the 2023 annual conference and on educational and spiritual  
11 formation resources for the congregations and individuals to use.
- 12 3. The Northern Illinois Conference encourage all local churches to consider taking a  
13 moment in worship to pray for peace in Korea, preferably around the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of  
14 the armistice of the Korean War.

15

16 **Rationale:**

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18 Christians affirm Christ is our peace, as widely witnessed in the New Testament including the  
19 following passage: "For he [Christ] is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one  
20 and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us" (Ephesians 2:14).

21

22 The year 2023 marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the armistice of the Korean War in 1953. The  
23 political and military tensions have continued since then, threatening peace on the Korean  
24 peninsula as well as threatening global peace.

25

26 The Korean War, which started on June 25, 1950 and lasted for three years, was an international  
27 war fought on the Korean peninsula, involving military forces from China, the Soviet Union,  
28 the United States, and United Nations (UN) Forces. An estimated 3 million civilians and  
29 combatants lost their lives in the war, with countless others injured in body and spirit. The  
30 descendants of those killed, survivors, veterans, the injured, and war refugees and orphans now  
31 live all over the world, bearing the pain of the war.

32

33 The armistice treaty of the Korean War on July 27, 1953 served as a military ceasefire and  
34 resulted in the division of Korea into two: North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)  
35 and South Korea (Republic of Korea). North and South Koreans share one language, common  
36 history, and cultural heritage. Since the national division in 1953, civilian communication or  
37 visits have not been allowed. During these years, husband and wives were separated. Parents  
38 and children were pulled apart. People in both North and South Korea have lived under the  
39 threat of war, political demonization of each other, and the pain of family separation.

40

41 The United States forces still are stationed in South Korea. The peace of Korea is not only a  
42 concern of the Korean people. It involves U.S. army (militarily); surrounding nations (geo-  
43 politically); and many other nations in this increasingly globalized world community. An  
44 escalation of tension in Korea can affect global peace. At the same time, a more peaceful  
45 situation in Korea can expand a sense of wellbeing for others.

46

- 1 Praying for peace is an important part of Christian discipleship. Specific prayer requests for  
2 Korea's peace may include the following:
- 3 • Praying for replacing the armistice treaty with a peace treaty
  - 4 • Praying for peace and reconciliation for Korea's separated families and their  
5 descendants
  - 6 • Praying for the descendants of those who were killed in the Korean War, those who  
7 were injured in the Korean War and still live with the wounds from the war, and all who  
8 were affected by the Korean War
  - 9 • Praying for transforming the demilitarized zone into a peace park
  - 10 • Praying for the peaceful reunification of the two Koreas
  - 11 • Praying for the world community to work for greater peace in the world; and

12  
13 Christ calls us to be peacemakers. Our prayers for peace will connect us with all who yearn for  
14 peace in Korea and in the world.

15  
16  
17 **Submitted by:**

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19  
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