

ANNUAL CONFERENCE
PETITION TO THE 2006 ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE

**TITLE: MORALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT RELATED TO ISRAEL AND
PALESTINE**

ACTION TO BE VOTED ON:

- 1 The Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church calls upon the United
2 Methodist General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits and the General Council on Finance
3 and Administration to review the investments of the church and undertake a process of phased
4 selective divestment from any multinational corporations profiting from Israel's occupation of
5 the Palestinian territory including:
6 • demolition of Palestinian homes,
7 • construction of the wall
8 • institutions that perpetrate or support violence against Israel, or any violence in
9 the area;
10 following United Methodist guidelines which require a period of information gathering and
11 evaluation of alternative means of economic intervention.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2006

TERMINATION DATE: June 30, 2007

ORIGINATOR OF THE PETITION

Amy R. Stapleton

PERSON TO PRESENT PETITION TO CONFERENCE:

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FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None

RATIONALE: Not debatable

12 **Pursuing Peace and Justice in the Holy Land**

13 This petition affirms Israel's right to exist within permanent, recognized and secure borders, and
14 the Palestinians' rights to self-determination and formation of a viable state; and the absolute
15 equality of all God's children, and the rejection of all efforts to dominate or to subjugate others
16 based on religion, race or ethnicity. The goal is to make all United Methodist and other
17 Americans aware of relationships to companies that benefit from the Israel's occupation of
18 Palestinian territories and give an opportunity to withdraw from such relationships, we as a
19 denomination are not unwitting participants in human right violations that violate Christian
20 principles and international law.

21
22 As Christians we are called by Jesus to be peacemakers. The Jewish and Christian communities
23 affirm all of the law and the prophets as summarized by Moses and quoted by Jesus, "Love the
24 Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first
25 and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbors as yourself.' All the
26 Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:34-40) As United
27 Methodist we honor Micah's call in the Old Testament to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk
28 humbly with our God, and we follow Christ's call to love neighbors as ourselves, by rejecting all
29 violence and acts of provocation that lead to violence. All peoples have the right to security, and
30 yet security for one people can never be achieved by denying security to others.

31
32 As United Methodist we are called to support members of Christ's church around the world,
33 including Palestinian Christians who are being forced to leave the Holy Land due to Israel's
34 confiscation of their property and the severe hardships of living under occupation. The United
35 Methodist Church should not profit from the illegal Israel occupation of Palestinian land or the
36 destruction of Palestinian homes, orchards, and lives, and we are committed to ensuring that our
37 denomination's finances are used in a manner consistent with Christ's teaching, our beliefs, and
38 international law. The illegal destruction of Palestinian homes and economy, and confiscation of
39 Palestinian land, are made possible by the use of armored bulldozers, helicopter gunships, tanks
40 and other equipment supplied to Israel by multinational corporations the profit from such violent
41 and deadly activities.

42 **United Methodist Statements**

43 By a vote of 877 to 19, the General Conference in 2004 voted to resolve that, “The United
44 Methodist Church opposes continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East
45 Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian
46 homes, the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements, and any vision of a “Greater Israel
47 that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its surroundings” (Book of
48 Resolutions, 2004, #312). The United Methodist Social Principles state that, “We deplore war
49 and urge the peaceful settlement of all disputes among nations.” (Para. 164.I), and that “human
50 values must outweigh military claims as governments determine their priorities...” (Para. 165.C).

51
52 The United Methodist Book of Resolutions exists a policy on “Avoidance by Divestment”, which
53 states: “This policy prohibits investment in enterprises that have policies or practices that are so
54 morally reprehensible that investment in these companies is not tolerated by the church. Our
55 denomination traditionally has avoid investments in liquor, tobacco, and gambling.

56
57 Historically many church investors have refused to invest in major military contractors,
58 companies with nuclear weapons contracts, or companies when they are doing business in South
59 Africa under apartheid. In some cases, they have divested of such companies, making public
60 their action as a moral statement.