

Christ to fully engage the global economy and to actively ensure the development of just and sustainable communities in the global economy. To that end, the Twenty-fourth General Synod calls on these institutions:

1. To continue to provide educational resources and advocacy opportunities and to be a prophetic voice for local churches and members on issues of economic globalization.
2. To urge all settings of the church in their roles as consumers to give priority in decision-making choices to justice concerns, for example, in not purchasing clothes and other consumer goods produced by sweatshop labor.
3. To provide resources on investments in corporations that reflect values resonant with those of the United Church of Christ. Such values can be found in past General Synod actions such as “Direct Investment in Weapons Producers” and “Investment and Corporate Responsibility with Regard to South Africa” (Fourteenth General Synod) and “A Call for Socially Responsible Investment” (Seventeenth General Synod).
4. To work in the spirit of Jesus to reform the principal international trade and finance institutions and governing bodies so that the needs and concerns of all persons, especially the poor and the marginalized, may be addressed in effective ways through their policies and actions.
5. To work for and provide opportunities for individuals and local churches to work for debt relief for developing countries.
6. To continue to develop both national and international partnerships with grassroots organizations, interfaith groups, and partner churches working

for economic justice in developing countries.

7. To work actively with the World Council of Churches, especially as it participates in the United Nations, on issues of economic globalization.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Twenty-fourth General Synod requests that Wider Church Ministries and Justice and Witness Ministries convene a coordinating committee to develop a plan including a timetable for implementation and make reports to the Twenty-fifth and subsequent General Synods.

#### **10. A CALL FOR CHURCH-WIDE SUPPORT OF OIKOCREDIT USA**

Rev. Keith Mills, on behalf of Committee Two, moved the adoption of the resolution “A Call For Church Wide Support Of Oikocredit USA.”

03-GS-17 VOTED: The Twenty-fourth General Synod adopts the resolution “A Call for Church Wide Support of Oikocredit USA.”

#### **A CALL FOR CHURCH WIDE SUPPORT OF OIKOCREDIT USA**

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ pronouncement, “Christian Faith: Economic Life and Justice,” establishes as a goal “the just transformation of the global economic order that fundamentally ensures economic, racial, and social justice for all God’s people throughout the world;” and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ and our global partners support development that promotes sustainability and the integrity of creation, justice, equality, and democratic, grassroots participation; and

WHEREAS, Oikocredit USA. has the support of a broad range of denominations and denominational bodies, including the United Church of Christ Wider Church Ministries, seminaries, religious orders, and investor groups; and

WHEREAS, Oikocredit has the support of more than four hundred sixty-five churches and church organizations from all over the world, including many in the sixty-five countries where loans are granted as well as eighteen thousand local church communities and individuals who invest via supporters' Association; and

WHEREAS, Oikocredit has made loans to over four hundred cooperatives and hundreds of thousands of people with micro-credit, employing about \$180 million in capital, about ten percent of which came from the United States; and

WHEREAS, Oikocredit USA has expanded its programs and outreach, intending to develop grassroots networks and working groups in fifteen cities so as to dramatically increase the funds available to meet the vast opportunities for improving the lives of the poorest on earth; and

WHEREAS, Oikocredit ethical investments aim at making a positive contribution:

- to enable poor people to become economically self-supporting
- to promote the economic position of women
- to benefit the local community, and

WHEREAS, investing in Oikocredit is similar to putting funds in deposits in a bank in the form of a note paying two percent for one, three, or five years; and

WHEREAS, there has been no loss of principal and maximum social and economic benefit with investments managed by the Calvert Foundation.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Twenty-fourth General Synod calls on the United Church of Christ in all its settings to seriously consider investing some institutional funds in Oikocredit USA and provide the opportunity for members and friends to do likewise; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the covenanted ministries, affiliated and associated

ministries, and related ministries be requested to develop plans for ministry-wide participation, educational resources, and partnership or covenanted sponsorship of Oikocredit USA.

Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

#### **11. TO SUPPORT COLOMBIAN CHURCHES AND LEADERS UNDER ATTACK**

Rev. Smith called on Mr Karl Hayes (SOC), chairperson of Committee Seven for three items of business. Mr Hayes moved the adoption of the resolution "To Support Colombian Churches and Leaders under Attack."

03-GS-18 VOTED: The Twenty-fourth General Synod adopts the resolution "To Support Colombian Churches and Leaders Under Attack"

#### **TO SUPPORT COLOMBIAN CHURCHES AND LEADERS UNDER ATTACK**

WHEREAS, Colombian churches and church leaders are under attack. Colombia's armed groups target both Protestants and Roman Catholics who counsel nonviolence, refuse to take sides, and provide pastoral care and humanitarian assistance to the 2.7 million displaced persons. Protestant leaders reported that during the first seven months of 2002, at least twenty Protestant pastors and church leaders were assassinated and more than four hundred churches were closed. Offices of churches and church alliances working for peace have been intimidated through unwarranted searches; and

WHEREAS, at the same time that churches and leaders who provide humanitarian aid have come under attack, the number of displaced Colombians has continued to grow, with the 342,000 displaced in 2001 increased by one thousand per month in the first six months of 2002, according to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees; and