

1
2 WHEREAS, medical technology, pain management and palliative care have made great advances, yet some persons
3 still face intolerable suffering during a terminal illness;
4
5 WHEREAS, the Ninth General Synod and the Eighteenth General Synod both passed end-of-life choice resolutions
6 entitled “Rights and Responsibilities of Christians Regarding Human Death,” which did not address the issue of
7 physician aid in dying;
8
9 WHEREAS, other faith communities have addressed end-of-life issues over the past 20 years;
10 WHEREAS, Oregon in 1997 passed a “Death with Dignity Act” permitting a mentally capable, dying adult to
11 request and receive from a physician a prescription to hasten death if the patient finds his or her suffering to be
12 unbearable, but only if strict and specific safeguards are followed;
13
14 WHEREAS, in Oregon since 1997 there have been no incidents of abuse of this law, and its use has been a rare
15 choice, since the will to live is the greatest safeguard there is, yet thousands who will never use the law to hasten
16 their own death are comforted to know that this choice is legally available if they should be among the few who
17 need it and choose it;
18
19 WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court has affirmed Oregon’s right to have such a law;
20
21 WHEREAS, many physicians, religious leaders, dying patients and family members strongly support physician aid
22 in dying with strong safeguards to prevent abuse;
23
24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-sixth General Synod calls upon the local churches, conferences,
25 and Justice and Witness Ministries in consultation with UCC Disabilities Ministries, Council for Health and Human
26 Service Ministries (CHHSM), UCC Professional Chaplains and Counselors, UCC Faith Community Nurses and
27 Physicians to study the following proposal and report their views through Justice and Witness Ministries to the
28 Twenty-seventh General Synod for further consideration and action:
29
30 That on the grounds of compassion and choice, if strict safeguards to prevent abuse are followed, a terminally ill and
31 mentally competent adult should have a legal right to request and receive medication from a willing physician to
32 hasten death if the patient finds his or her suffering to be unbearable.
33
34 FUNDING
35 Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the
36 affected agencies and the funds available.
37
38 **7. RESOLUTION: A CALL FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE PERSECUTED IN THE PHILIPPINES,**
39 **AND AN END TO EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS AND OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**
40 Moderator Merlyn Lawrence called on Ms. Sarah Frische-Mouri, chairperson of Committee Eight, for the
41 introduction of resolutions from the committee.
42
43 Ms. Frische-Mouri moved the adoption of the resolution “A Call for Solidarity with the Persecuted in the
44 Philippines, and an End to Extra-Judicial Killings and Other Human Rights Violations,” as amended by the
45 committee.
46
47 Ms. Jelani McGadney (MI) moved an amendment to strike lines 126 and 127 from the resolution:
48 “future military appropriations from the United States to the Philippines should be conditional . . . “ and to change to
49 “any future appropriations from the United States of America should be conditional on . . . “
50
51 Following discussion, a motion was made to close debate.
52
53 07-GS-38 VOTED: The Twenty-sixth General Synod votes to close debate on the amendment.
54

1 07-GS-39 VOTED: The Twenty-sixth General Synod adopts the amendment to strike lines 126 and 127 from the
2 resolution: “future military appropriations from the United States to the Philippines should be conditional . . . “ and
3 to change to “any future appropriations from the United States of America should be conditional on . . . “
4

5 Ms. Jelani McGadney then moved a second amendment to the resolution to strike lines 133 and 134:
6 “military appropriations be conditional upon demonstrated promotion of human rights . . .” and replace with
7 “any appropriations to the Filipino Government be conditional upon demonstrated promotion of human rights.”
8

9 07-GS-40 VOTED: The Twenty-sixth General Synod adopts the amendment by general consent.
10

11 07-GS-41 VOTED: The Twenty-sixth General Synod adopts the resolution “A Call for Solidarity with the
12 Persecuted in the Philippines, and an End to Extra-Judicial Killings and Other Human Rights Violations.”
13

14 **A CALL FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE PERSECUTED IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND AN END TO**
15 **EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS AND OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**
16

17 WHEREAS, More than 800 people have been murdered in extra-judicial killings in the Philippines over the past 5
18 years, and nearly 200 people have been forcibly abducted, with none of these cases solved;
19

20 WHEREAS, Those who have been killed or disappeared have been involved in work for economic and political
21 justice within the legal framework, yet characterized by the Philippine government as *destabilizers* and *enemies of*
22 *the state*;
23

24 WHEREAS, Our sisters and brothers of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, are subject, as are most of
25 the citizens of the Philippines, to a culture of repression and terror, and additionally live and work with the
26 awareness that 16 of the 27 religious workers killed to date [March, 2007] have been members of the UCCP;
27

28 WHEREAS, \$179.6 million has been provided by the U.S. government to the Philippines, from 2001-2004 “to equip
29 security forces” [See GAO report, July, 2005] with then-assistant U.S. Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz
30 referring to the Philippines as the “Second Front in the War on Terror” [See on-line *AsiaTimes*, May, 2003];
31

32 WHEREAS, in a country where basic needs for health care, public education, and gainful employment are
33 neglected, the Philippine government has allocated \$208 million for military hardware upgrades to combat
34 insurgency;
35

36 WHEREAS, As people of faith we cry out to the Most High to “*listen and do justice for the vulnerable and the*
37 *oppressed, so that mortals may bring terror no more,*”
38

39 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that General Synod XXVI calls upon The General Minister and President
40

- 41 • to communicate to the United States Congress that future appropriations from the United States of America
42 to the Philippines should be conditional on the demonstrated promotion of human rights through effective
43 prosecution, trial and appropriate punishment of those alleged to perpetrate, assist, tolerate or are otherwise
44 responsible for human rights violations against civilian populations;
45
- 46 • to encourage Wider Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, Conferences, and Local Churches to
47 advocate that any appropriations to the Filipino Government be conditional upon demonstrated promotion
48 of human rights;
49
- 50 • to ask individual members of the United Church of Christ, U.S.A., and Local Churches to pray for our
51 partner church, the United Church of Christ, Philippines, in this time of upheaval, and to understand and be
52 ultimately concerned for the economic, political, and religious dynamics of the country;
53
- 54 • to invite our ecumenical partners in the United States to join us in denouncing the extrajudicial killings and
55 forced disappearances in the Philippines;
56

- 1 • to call upon Philippines President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to stop the executions and violence and call the
2 perpetrators into account under the law;
3
4 • to call upon U.S. President George W. Bush to reconsider his 2003 description of the Philippines as a
5 “model of democracy” and to pursue the realization of democratic rule in the Philippines;
6
7 • to maintain supportive communication with the UCCP;
8
9

10 Wider Church Ministries

- 11
12 • to encourage mission partnerships between Conferences and the UCCP;
13
14 • to maintain supportive communication with the UCCP;
15
16 • to provide and disseminate information on the current state of the Philippines to Local Churches &
17 Conferences;
18

19 Justice & Witness Ministries

- 20
21 • to call upon U.S. government agencies and elected representatives to examine the links between U.S. funds
22 and the violence and repression in the Philippines;
23
24 • to identify, through Justice and Peace Network communications, legislators who could be called upon to
25 provide leadership in addressing policy and funding issues pertinent to the violations of human rights in the
26 Philippines;
27
28 • to provide information and resources to raise awareness in Local Churches;
29

30 Conferences

- 31
32 • to express support and solidarity with the members of the UCCP in living out Jesus Christ’s Gospel
33 message, particularly in promoting economic justice. (Luke 4:18-19);
34
35 • to establish linkages (dialogue, conversations, programs, etc.) toward mission partnerships with the UCCP.
36

37 Local Churches

- 38
39 • to seek out and employ avenues of advocacy for those persecuted in the Philippines;
40
41 • to prayerfully consider forming personal relationships with members of UCCP in affected areas for support
42 and solidarity.
43

44 FUNDING

45 Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the
46 affected agencies and the funds available.
47

48 **8. ACTION RELATED TO THE STILLSPEAKING INITIATIVE**

49 Assistant Moderator Kevin Manz called upon Mr. Aaron Gould, Vice Chairperson of the Executive Council, to
50 present an action related to the StillSpeaking Initiative.
51

52 Mr. Gould stated that in 1999 an action was taken that stated: “Through the Strengthen the Church offering we will
53 share in the growth and future of the United Church of Christ through its local congregations and conferences. We
54 will further our commitment to be a multi-racial/multi-cultural church, accessible to all. We will strengthen and