

the application of international justice because of financial greed and disregard for the value of Congolese people,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Twenty-eighth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages its members, congregations, and various settings to pray, reflect and advocate on behalf of sisters and brothers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that congregations will be encouraged to recognize "Congo Week," the third week in October, in their respective annual worship calendars as a week of commemoration for the millions of victims of the scramble for Congo's resources and a stand for justice in solidarity with the people of the Congo; and

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that congregations working with Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ carry out advocacy and education across the globe for the Congo, with governments, the United Nations, and other governmental and non-governmental organizations, and with multinational corporations, until Congolese security and sovereignty is obtained. Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made available in accordance with the overall mandates of the Covenanted Ministries called upon and the funds available.

#### **FUNDING**

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

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Justice and Witness Ministries is requested to work with Wider Church Ministries to implement this resolution.

#### **7. IN SUPPORT OF THE RELEASE OF PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS**

Moderator Robertson called upon Ms. Barbara Ferguson-Kamara, Chairperson of Committee Four, for that Committee's presentation.

Ms. Ferguson-Kamara moved adoption of the resolution "In Support of the Release of Puerto Rican Political Prisoners," as amended.

**11-GS-28 VOTED:** The Twenty-eighth General Synod grants voice to Ms. Marilyn Pagan Banks and Ms. Lisa Torres to speak to the resolution.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Bethany Joy Lang (MICH) called the question and the motion was seconded.

**11-GS-29 VOTED:** The Twenty-eighth General Synod votes to close debate on the resolution "In Support of the Release of Puerto Rican Political Prisoners."

Mr. Robertson reminded delegates that this motion requires a 2/3 majority vote.

**11-GS-30 VOTED:** The Twenty-eighth General Synod votes to approve the resolution “In Support of the Release of Puerto Rican Political Prisoners,” as amended.

**IN SUPPORT OF THE RELEASE OF PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS**

**WHEREAS**, in 1999, President Clinton released eleven of the fifteen prisoners for whom the UCC had advocated; and

**WHEREAS**, between 1999 and 2009, two of the remaining prisoners were also released from prison, and

**WHEREAS**, throughout this period, the released prisoners successfully re-integrated into and have been contributing positively to civil society, and

**WHEREAS**, in July, 2010, one of the two remaining prisoners, Carlos Alberto Torres, was also released from prison, receiving a hero’s welcome both in Chicago and Puerto Rico, and

**WHEREAS**, the one remaining prisoner of the fifteen for whom the United Church of Christ had advocated, Oscar López Rivera, has now served more than a decade more in prison since the release of the others, is now the longest-held political prisoner in Latin America, and on May 29, 2011, will have been imprisoned 30 years, and

**WHEREAS**, as a father and grandfather, Mr. López Rivera has watched from behind bars as his daughter and grand-daughter have grown up without him, and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. López Rivera’s legacy of work for positive social change and community-building is amply attested in the many organizations in Chicago’s Puerto Rican neighborhood of Humboldt Park that trace their origins to his work as a community organizer, and

**WHEREAS**, Avelino González Claudio was arrested in 2008 and recently sentenced to seven years for his involvement in the Puerto Rican independence movement, and is now suffering from Parkinson’s Disease,

**WHEREAS**, many members of the United Church of Christ have participated in this ministry with political prisoners throughout these years,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the United Church of Christ is a church called to speak against the inhumane treatment in U.S. prisons, including the injustice of long sentences, lack of compassion, and lack of medical care these cases represent, that the Twenty-eighth General Synod affirm its support for the release of Oscar López Rivera for humanitarian reasons and Avelino González Claudio for compassionate reasons, and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the General Synod directs the General Minister and President to write to the President of the United States and request the release of these prisoners.

## **FUNDING**

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

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Justice and Witness Ministries is requested to implement this resolution.

## **8. COVENANT FOR CHURCH YOUTH MINISTRIES**

Moderator Robertson called upon Mr. Neill Robinson, Chairperson for Committee Five, for the presentation from that Committee.

Mr. Robinson moved the adoption of the resolution “A Covenant for Church Youth Ministries.”

Mr. Bob Atkinson (MOMS) moved to amend line 136 by adding “to take two full days away.”

**11-GS-31 VOTED:** The Twenty-eighth General Synod votes to amend the resolution by adding the words “to take two full days away” at line 136.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Megan Waleff (PC) moved to close debate and the motion was seconded.

**11-GS-32 VOTED:** The Twenty-eighth General Synod votes to close debate on the resolution “Covenant for Church Youth Ministries.”

**11-GS-33 VOTED:** The Twenty-eighth General Synod voted to adopt the resolution “Covenant for Church Youth Ministries,” as amended.

## **A COVENANT FOR CHURCH YOUTH MINISTRIES**

**WHEREAS**, the Twenty-eighth General Synods believes that youth workers need spiritual support in their work with young people;

**WHEREAS**, gifts and call are best discerned in the context of the faith community;

**WHEREAS**, taking time to think and pray is just as essential for our youth workers as organizing events and meeting young people;

**WHEREAS**, maintaining the gifts and skills of the youth workers is an ongoing process and that it is important to continually invest in professional development;

**WHEREAS**, taking regular time off helps maintain our youth workers’ passion and energy for their work with young people;

**WHEREAS**, having a youth worker does not release the rest of the church from our responsibilities toward young people;