

**Funding:**

The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**Implementation:**

The Collegium of Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries of other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

7. **A CALL FOR THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TO ADVOCATE FOR THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN LIVING UNDER ISRAELI MILITARY OCCUPATION.**

Moderator Artt indicated that one of the highlights of this Synod is a renewed emphasis on the youth program and the ways in which our young people have been more intentionally engaged with the work of the General Synod. In that regard, the General Synod Program and Planning Committee made the decision to allow young people to take a few moments to present a “youth perspective” on the issues as a part of the deliberations. Without objection, Moderator Artt respectfully requested that the General Synod suspend the standing rules to allow the body to hear a three-minute presentation from the Youth as Synod as they prepare to debate and take action upon the current motion.

**17-GS-11 VOTED:** The Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to set aside the standing rule to allow the youth to speak to the resolution.

Moderator Artt invited Leslie Schenk (WISC) to the podium to present the Resolution: A call for the United Church of Christ to Advocate for the Rights of Children Living under Israeli Military Occupation.

Leslie Schenk spoke on the Resolution, thanked the youth who also participated, indicated that three amendments were made and made a Motion on behalf of Committee 2, that the Thirty-first General Synod approve A Call for the United Church of Christ to Advocate for the Rights of Children Living under Israeli Military Occupation as amended by Committee.

Discussion:

Alex Cumbe (CAC) Spoke in Favor.

Ben Mercie (CAC) Spoke in Favor.

Lucy Adkins (CAC) Spoke in Favor.

Catherine Alder (CCP) Spoke in Favor.

Marisa Brown Ludwig (MASS) Spoke in Favor.

Kim Whistler Vasko (ILL) Spoke in Favor.

Dave Yoshida (CONN) Spoke in Favor.

Lorrin Shepard (FLA) Spoke in Favor.

Amelia Nugent (MASS) Spoke to the fact the information is dated

Allie Perry (CONN) Spoke in favor.

**17-GS-12 VOTED:** The Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the resolution on a Call for the United Church of Christ to Advocate for the Rights of Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation.

**A CALL FOR THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TO ADVOCATE FOR  
THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN LIVING UNDER ISRAELI MILITARY OCCUPATION  
A Resolution of Witness**

**Text of the Motion:**

**Whereas** General Synods of the United Church of Christ have repeatedly called for a just settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, for an end to prolonged Israeli military occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza, for the upholding of principles of non-violence, and for the protection of human rights; and

**Whereas** the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which the State of Israel has ratified, calls on states to “Treat every child deprived of liberty with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age,” to use arrest and imprisonment of children “only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time,” to give detained children “prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty” and “the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits,” and in no case to subject children to “torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;” and

**Whereas** UNICEF in 2013 determined that the “Ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalized” and that this ill-treatment of children includes the use of blindfolds, hand-ties, strip searches, physical violence, verbal abuse and intimidation, denial of access to lawyers and parents prior to and during interrogation, and failure to inform children of their legal rights, such as their right to remain silent; and

**Whereas** subsequent update reports to UNICEF’s 2013 report have found that the situation has changed little for Palestinian children arrested by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank; and

**Whereas** the United States Department of State in its annual country reports on human rights practices has, since 2007 in each annual country report on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, included data and information on ill-treatment and torture of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention, denial of fair trial rights in Israeli military courts, and other grave violations against children committed by Israeli forces and settlers; and

**Whereas** Defense for Children International – Palestine and other international, Palestinian, and Israeli human rights organizations regularly publish reports confirming Israel’s widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children arrested in the occupied West Bank, ill-treatment which includes heavily armed Israeli soldiers invading children’s homes and arresting them in the middle of the night; failure to notify parents of the reason for arrest or the location of detention; denial of access to lawyers during interrogation; failure to inform children of their

rights; the use of position abuse, threats, and isolation by interrogators to coerce confessions; the use of solitary confinement for interrogation purposes; acceptance of confessions obtained by coercion or torture as legal courtroom evidence, even those confessions written in Hebrew and not understood by children coerced into signing them; and the routine transfer of Palestinian children out of the occupied Palestinian territories to prisons inside Israel in violation of international law; and

**Whereas** Israeli forces have held an average of 201 Palestinian children in custody each month since 2011, and this number spiked dramatically in late 2015 so that by the end of February 2016 the total had increased to 440, the highest number at any given point since the Israel Prison Service began releasing data in 2008; and

**Whereas** the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act specifies that no military assistance be given to any country that “engages in a consistent pattern of gross violation of internationally recognized human rights” and on at least eleven previous occasions the U.S. has withheld assistance from countries based on their human rights violations;

**Therefore, be it resolved,** that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

**Calls** on the State of Israel to guarantee basic due process rights and exercise an absolute prohibition against torture and ill-treatment of detained children (defined as persons under 18 years of age) ensuring that, from the moment of arrest, all operations and procedures are carried out in accordance with international juvenile justice standards, specifically the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and

**Requests** the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ to communicate this call to the Prime Minister of Israel and the Israeli Ambassador to the United States, noting that among the practices in Israel’s military detention system that require change are the use of nighttime arrests in the child’s home, physical and verbal abuse, blindfolds and restraints, strip searches, solitary confinement, coerced confessions and confessions written in Hebrew, as well as the separation of detained children from their parents and legal counselors (including the transfer of Palestinian children to prisons within the State of Israel that their parents are not permitted to visit);

**Calls** on the government of the United States to adhere to its own established law – in this case, the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act – by withholding military assistance from the State of Israel due to its practices of arrest and detention of Palestinian children, requiring Israel to guarantee basic due process rights and exercise an absolute prohibition against torture and ill-treatment of detained children, ensuring that, from the moment of arrest, all operations and procedures are carried out in accordance with international juvenile justice standards, specifically the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and REQUESTS the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ to communicate this call to the United States Senate, as well as the President, the Vice President, and the Secretary of State of the United States;

**Calls** on the United States Senate to join with 194 other nations in ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child so as to bring stronger international pressure to bear on

Israel to comply with the Convention's provisions, in particular Articles 37 and 40 of the Convention governing the treatment of children held in detention and REQUESTS the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ to communicate this call to the United States Senate, as well as the President, Vice President, and Secretary of State of the United States;

**Expresses** gratitude to Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for its advocacy on behalf of children in Palestine and the State of Israel;

**Encourages** continued partnership with local, national and global ecumenical and interfaith partners, as well as with Palestinian and Israeli organizations that are advocating for the rights of children and providing educational, social, and psychological support for children and their families adversely affected by the occupation; and

**Encourages** respectful dialogue among people of all faiths about this issue that has impacted generations.

**Calls on** all settings of the United Church of Christ to learn about the plight of children in Palestine and the State of Israel, as well as to support implementation of the resolution from Thirtieth General Synod entitled "A Call for the United Church of Christ to Take Actions Toward a Just Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," using as an implementation guide the document "Promoting a Just Peace in Palestine-Israel: A Guide for United Church of Christ Faith Leaders," produced by the United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network.

**Funding and Implementation:**

The funding for the implementation of this Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

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**8. BUDGET PRESENTATION AND VOTE**

Moderator Artt introduced Robert Freiberg, Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee of the Board, and Stephen Jones, Chief Financial Officer for the United Church of Christ who presented a historical financial snapshot and projections. (Appendix F)

Questions from the floor:

Meredith Jackson (MOMS) Where are the numbers for the budget.

Answer: The Budget is voted on by the Board; the General Synod votes on the allocation of the money for the budgets.

Moderator Artt called on Robert Freiberg who moved that the General Synod adopt a National Basic Allocation base of \$4.95 million and \$4.63 million for the budget years 2018 and 2019.