

GA-2571

**Affirmation of the World Council of Churches call to “End Apartheid, Occupation, and Impunity in Palestine and Israel,” and of solidarity with Palestinian people as we struggle for an end to genocide**

**(Sense of the Assembly)**

**BACKGROUND**

As of July 9, 2025, the United Nations reports that at least 57,680 Palestinians in Gaza and 941 Palestinians in the West Bank have been killed directly by Israeli Forces since October 7, 2023, of which an estimated 17,121 were children; and

The International Court of Justice<sup>1</sup> issued an injunction in 2024 ordering the State of Israel to take certain measures to avoid genocide and those measures have not been implemented. Amnesty International<sup>2</sup> and Human Rights Watch<sup>3</sup> both issued reports in December 2024 which described the acts of genocide that have taken place in Gaza. The United States has failed to comply with the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court for Benjamin Netanyahu during his most recent visit to Washington DC.

A report from Adalah<sup>4</sup> published in May 2025 details that “Israel’s policies in the West Bank, particularly in Area C, constitute serious violations of international law and amount to international crimes.” and that this deepens the practice of de facto annexation and denies the Palestinian people’s right to self-determination; and

The U.S. government has approved for the State of Israel approximately \$34 billion in military assistance and the sales of weapons, arms, and other financial support between October 2023 and March 2025, at least 69% of Israel’s arms imports come from the US, and US made military vehicles and weapons have been identified as being used to conduct acts of genocide.

Statement on Palestine and Israel by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 18-24 June 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> [Order of 26 January 2024](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Amnesty concludes Israel is committing genocide in Gaza](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Israel’s Crime of Extermination, Acts of Genocide in Gaza | Human Rights Watch](#)

<sup>4</sup>

32 *Statement on Palestine and Israel: A Call to End Apartheid, Occupation, and Impunity in*  
33 *Palestine and Israel*

34 "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

35 - Amos 5:24 (NRSV)

36 The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Johannesburg,  
37 South Africa, on 18-24 June 2025, gathers in deep lamentation and outrage as the crisis  
38 in Palestine and Israel escalates to levels that flagrantly violate international  
39 humanitarian and human rights law as well as the most basic principles of morality.

40 We recognize a clear distinction between the Jewish people, our siblings in faith, and  
41 the acts of the Government of Israel, and we reaffirm that the WCC stands firm against  
42 any kind of racism, including antisemitism, anti-Arab racism, and islamophobia.  
43 However, the unbearable suffering inflicted on the people of Gaza, and the escalating  
44 violence and oppression in the West Bank and in Jerusalem compel the global  
45 fellowship of churches to speak with clarity, urgency, and commitment to the principles  
46 of justice under international law and ethics.

47 The Government of Israel's military campaign in Gaza has entailed grave breaches of  
48 the Fourth Geneva Convention which may constitute genocide and/or other crimes  
49 under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Simultaneously, the  
50 occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem continue to experience intensified violence,  
51 illegal settlement expansion, and systemic human rights violations. These actions defy  
52 international legal norms, including the United Nations Charter, the Geneva  
53 Conventions, international human rights treaties, and numerous Security Council and  
54 General Assembly resolutions.

55 The World Council of Churches reaffirms its long-standing commitment to inter-religious  
56 dialogue and cooperation, and to international law as a framework for peace, justice,  
57 and accountability.

58 In this spirit, the WCC Central Committee calls for:

- 59 1. Naming the Reality of Apartheid: We recognize and denounce the system of  
60 apartheid imposed by Israel on the Palestinian people, in violation of international  
61 law and moral conscience.
- 62 2. Implementing Sanctions and Accountability: We call on states, churches, and  
63 international institutions to impose consequences for violations of international  
64 law, including targeted sanctions, divestment, and arms embargoes. Full support

must be given to the International Criminal Court and UN mechanisms investigating potential war crimes and crimes against humanity.

3. Affirming Palestinian Rights and Freedom: We uphold the inalienable human rights of Palestinians to freedom, justice, return, and self-determination. We demand the end of the occupation and the lifting of the unlawful blockade on Gaza.
4. Support for the resilience and witness of Palestinian Christian churches and communities, upholding their right to remain on their land and to freely practice their faith.

We commend the leadership of the South African government in seeking justice and accountability to international law through the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and urge all states to comply with the ICJ's rulings. Churches worldwide are called to witness, to speak out, and to act.

"And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace." — James 3:18

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**Whereas**, on June 24th 2025 the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC), meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa issued the statements "A Call to End Apartheid, Occupation, and Impunity in Palestine and Israel"<sup>5</sup> which stated "The Government of Israel's military campaign in Gaza has entailed grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention which may constitute genocide and/or other crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)" and "Statement on Threats to Peace and People's Security: A Kairos Moment for Just Peace"<sup>6</sup>; and

**Whereas**, "A Pastoral Letter for Peace and Justice from Leaders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)"<sup>7</sup> was issued on September 3, 2024 which, as part of their witness, stated "What Palestinians are experiencing is nothing less than genocide."

**Whereas**, the General Assembly of the Christian Church meeting in Louisville, Kentucky<sup>8</sup>, July 29 to August 1, 2023 adopted GA-2339: COMPELLED TO WITNESS: ANSWERING THE CRY OF OUR PALESTINIAN SIBLINGS; and

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<sup>5</sup> [Statement on Palestine and Israel: A Call to End Apartheid, Occupation, and Impunity in Palestine and Israel | World Council of Churches](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Statement on Threats to Peace and People's Security: A Kairos Moment for Just Peace | World Council of Churches](#)

<sup>7</sup> [A pastoral letter for peace and justice from leaders of the Christian Church \(Disciples of Christ\) - Global Ministries](#)

<sup>8</sup> [GA-2339-Compelled-to-Witness-.pdf](#)

94 **Whereas**, since March 2, 2025, the State of Israel, has blocked aid supplies including  
95 food, fuel, water, and medicine from entering Gaza, and Israeli defense minister, Israel  
96 Katz, said, “Israel’s policy is clear: no humanitarian aid will enter Gaza,” the  
97 intensification of a longer blockade dating to 2007, and restrictions that are part of  
98 Israel’s military occupation of Gaza since 1967; and

99 **Whereas**, on July 11, 2025 a spokesperson for the UN Office for Human Rights<sup>9</sup> raised  
100 concerns of “atrocities crimes having been committed and the risk of further atrocity  
101 crimes” as people “have a choice between being shot or being fed”; and

102 **Whereas**, the US and Israel are involved in law enforcement training exchanges<sup>10</sup>  
103 that continue to criminalize, and violently repress the first amendment rights of members  
104 of our faith community, and have perpetuated police brutality and state violence in the  
105 Stop Cop City Movement, the Movement for Black Lives and other movements for  
106 collective liberation seeking to build Beloved Community; and

107 **Whereas**, on June 22nd, 2025 the United States struck multiple targets<sup>11</sup> within Iran  
108 further increasing tensions, violence, and the militarization of the region, resulting in  
109 retaliatory strikes<sup>12</sup>; and

110 **Whereas**, violence and the neocolonialism of extractive industries threaten flora and  
111 fauna on Mother Earth, and all peoples across the globe from Gaza to Sudan, the  
112 Congo to Iran, Korea to Colombia, West Papua to Western Sahara, Aotearoa to Haiti,  
113 and everywhere in between; and

114 **Whereas**, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has long opposed war and violence,  
115 arguing for a more peaceful and just future; and

116 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the 2025 General Assembly of the Christian  
117 Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting July 12-15, 2025,  
118 in Memphis, Tennessee, affirms and celebrates the WCC June 2025 statements; and

119 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, condemns the genocide in Gaza, permanent  
120 displacement of Palestinians, and illegal annexation of land as inconsistent with  
121 international law and our vision of peace and justice, urging the US and State of Israel  
122 to cease these actions and their support of them; and

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<sup>9</sup> [Gaza: ‘Unacceptable’ choice between getting shot or getting fed | UN News](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Abolish the GILEE Program and Stop Cop City: A Statement From the Black Alliance for Peace Atlanta Citywide Alliance — The Black Alliance for Peace](#)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2025/06/21/nx-s1-5441127/iran-us-strike-nuclear-trump>

<sup>12</sup> [No casualties reported after Iran missile attack on U.S. base in Qatar](#)

123 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, denounces all violent acts of aggression, recognizing  
124 that peace is the only hope for a sustained future as “all who take the sword will die by  
125 the sword.” (Matthew 26:52); and

126 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, affirms the support of the "Apartheid Free Communities"  
127 campaign and encourages congregations to support education and advocacy within  
128 their own communities, including support for movements to divest from Israel bonds and  
129 any bonds from nation-states that perpetuate war crimes and break international law;  
130 and

131 **FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED**, calls on all expressions of the Christian Church  
132 (Disciples of Christ) to work towards a more peaceful and just world, and expand  
133 ministries to counter all acts of violence, war, human rights abuses, and genocide.

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135 In solidarity and struggle,  
136 C Stonebraker-Martinez, Ohio Region representative

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138 Daniel Mitchell, Heart of the Rockies Christian Church, Ft Collins, CO

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140 Rev. Dan Adolphson, First Christian Church, Minneapolis, MN

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142 Rev. Heather Patricia-Tolleson, First Christian Church, Katy, TX

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144 Rev. Mike Miller, Marion Christian Church

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146 Erin Gresham, Mackinaw Christian Church

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148 Eric Brown, Woodland Christian Church, Columbus, OH

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150 Rev. Gloria Soja, Helena, MT

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152 Tim Butler, Elkhart Christian Church, Elkhart, IA

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154 Rev. Mary Jacobs, First Christian Church, Orange, CA

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156 Rev. Christopher Stark, First Christian Church, Niles, OH

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158 Rev. Michael Doerr, First Christian Church, Wauseon, OH

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160 Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn, Vista La Mesa Christian Church, La Mesa, CA

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162 Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr., President, Disciples Justice Action Network, Woodland  
163 Christian Church, Columbus, OH  
164  
165 Rev. Stephen Underwood, Kansas City, MO  
166  
167 Rev. Dr. Luther Young, Lighthouse Church, Chicago, IL  
168  
169 Rev. Don Heath, Disciples Christian Church, Edmond, OK  
170  
171 Minister Mary Heath, Disciples Christian Church, Edmond, OK  
172  
173 Marci Mazza-Fredley, Eastwood Christian Church, TN  
174  
175 Rev. Sarah Zuniga, Allisonville Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN  
176  
177 Sophia M. Barnett, Full Gospel Christian Church, Detroit, MI  
178  
179 Rita Nakashima Brock, First Christian Church, Minneapolis, MN  
180  
181 Victoria Boyd-Kennedy, Rock Bridge Christian Church, Columbia, Missouri  
182  
183 Rev. Aneesah Louise-Ettress Veatch, First Christian Church, Fullerton, CA  
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185 Rev. Jack Veatch, First Christian Church, Fullerton, CA  
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187 Rev. Brian Frederick-Gray, Allisonville Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN  
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189 Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Murphy, Plymouth Congregational Church, Fort Wayne, IN  
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191 Erin Perry, Rock Bridge Christian Church, Columbia, Missouri  
192  
193 Isaac Ackerman, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Creve Coeur, IL  
194  
195 Amory Merriman, United Christian Church, California, PA  
196  
197 Rev. Liz DeWeese, Brookemeade Congregational Church of the UCC, Nashville, TN  
198  
199 Rev. Awit Marcelino, St Thomas Christian Church, St Thomas, ON, Canada  
200  
201 Rev. Alexa Dava, Woodland Christian Church, Lexington, KY

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203 Rev. Tevita Uesi, First Tongan Christian Church, Taylorville, UT  
204  
205 Rev. Dr. Ken Brooker Langston, Disciples Center for Public Witness, Disciples Justice  
206 Action Network, Annapolis, MD  
207  
208 Rev. Daniel Lyvers, First Christian Church, Chattanooga, TN  
209  
210 Rev. Dr. Virginia J. White, University of Chicago Divinity School, Chicago, IL  
211  
212 Inspired by our siblings within the UCC who are discerning their, "[Declaration for an End](#)  
213 [to the Genocide in Gaza](#)"