

1
2
3
4
5
6

<p style="text-align: center;">METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD ASSEMBLY National Conference Center Leesburg, Virginia June 19-20, 2015</p>
--

7 **Reference & Counsel Number:** 2015-003 **Secretary's Number:** 6 . 3R

8 **Title:** **Conditioning U.S. Aid to Israel on Cessation of Israeli Settlement**
9 **Construction in Occupied Areas**

10 **Submitted:** Rev. Michael Gutzler, Middle East Working Group, Global Mission Committee,
11 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod

12 **Received:** April 29, 2015

13 **Whereas** the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in assembly in 2005
14 adopted a "Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine" to build
15 "a movement that will strengthen the resolve of political leaders to find a peaceful
16 and just solution in the Holy Land" (I.A)ⁱ; and

17 **Whereas** the Strategy commits the ELCA to work toward a "cessation of all settlement
18 activities;" (II.B.1.b) and

19 **Whereas** the 2011 Metropolitan Washington, D. C. Synod Assembly received *Kairos*
20 *Palestine: a Moment of Truth* as an authentic perspective of Palestinian
21 Christians on the state of affairs in their homeland, and as an expression of their
22 commitment to finding peace, justice, and reconciliation with their brothers and
23 sisters through the way of the Christ we follow together;ⁱⁱ and

24 **Whereas** Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the transfer of an occupying
25 power's civilian population into occupied territory;ⁱⁱⁱ and

26 **Whereas** Israel continues to announce new settlement construction and to actively build
27 settlements on occupied Palestinian land,^{iv} and

28 **Whereas** Israeli Housing Minister Uri Ariel estimates that the number of Israeli settlers in
29 the West Bank and East Jerusalem will increase 50% by 2020,^v living in more
30 than 125 Israeli-approved/sanctioned settlements^{vi} subsidized by the Israeli
31 government at an estimated cost of \$281,050,000/year;^{vii} therefore, be it

32 **RESOLVED,** that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly direct the synodical
33 bishop to urge members of the Congress of the United States representing the
34 districts of the synod to make future U.S. aid to Israel contingent on Israel's halt
35 to all settlement-building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; and, be it further

37 **RESOLVED,** that Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly encourages members of
38 the synod's congregations to contact their congressional representatives and
39 senators, asking them to support and apply this condition to future U.S. aid to
40 Israel and that the Middle East Working Group of the synod provide information
41 and resources in support of this advocacy on the synod website.

ⁱ Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine:

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PNW_Strategy.pdf

ⁱⁱ Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth, A Word of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering:

<http://www.kairospalestine.ps/content/kairos-document>

ⁱⁱⁱ Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 49: <https://www.icrc.org/ihl/WebART/380-600056>

^{iv} Reuters, 6 April 2015:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/06/us-israel-palestinians-settlements-insig-idUSKBN0MX0T220150406>

^v Jerusalem Post, 3 Mar 2015:

<http://www.jpost.com/National-News/Housing-minister-sees-50-percent-more-settlers-in-West-Bank-by-2019-352501>

^{vi} B'Tselem, The Israel Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories

<http://www.btselem.org/settlements/statistics>

^{vii} The Macro Center for Political Economics, 19 Feb 2015:

<https://www.scribd.com/doc/257760015/A-Comprehensive-Analysis-of-the-Settlements-Economic-Costs-and-Alternative-Costs-to-the-State-of-Israel>