

Promoting Peace and Justice in Israel/Palestine Positions of The Episcopal Church

Statements by the Presiding Bishop

In addition to meeting with political and religious leaders in our country and in Israel/Palestine, the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, has repeatedly called for all parties to respect the human rights of residents in the region, including members of all faith traditions, and to take concrete steps towards achieving justice, security, and a lasting peace.



She is shown at right with the Rt. Rev. Suheil Dawani, Bishop of Jerusalem, during her visit to the Diocese of Jerusalem in 2010.

Among the Presiding Bishop's recent statements, letters, and speeches are the following:

- October 3, 2011 -- "Pastoral letter on Israeli-Palestinian Peace"
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/notice/episcopal-church-presiding-bishop-issues-pastoral-letter-israeli-palestinian-peace>
- January 16, 2011 -- Letter to President Obama asking that the US not veto the UN Security Council resolution calling for a halt to Israeli settlements in the West Bank
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/notice/episcopal-church-presiding-bishop-writes-president-obama-un-security-council-resolution-about>
- September 29, 2010 -- Participation in the "call for peace" issued by the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East during its meetings with Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and National Security Advisor General James Jones
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/notice/episcopal-church-presiding-bishop-joins-interreligious-coalition-call-peace-jerusalem>
- June 15, 2010 -- Speech at the "Middle East Prayer Breakfast" held in the Russell Senate Office Building
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/notice/episcopal-presiding-bishop-jefferts-schori-middle-east-prayer-breakfast>

Policy Resolutions of the General Convention and Executive Council

With the engagement of the Presiding Bishop, as well as lay and clergy at the grassroots, and based on the public policy resolutions passed at General Convention and by the Executive Council, the Episcopal Church continues its commitment to a two-state solution as the only viable avenue to a just peace for both Palestinians and Israelis.

The Church seeks an agreement that guarantees Israel's security and Palestinian aspirations for a viable sovereign state with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both Israel and Palestine.

More specifically, church policy states or calls for the following:

- Disputes should be settled by direct negotiations and mutual recognition.
- Jerusalem should be safeguarded as an “inter-religious municipality.”
- Support should be given to the Diocese of Jerusalem and the diminishing Christian community in the Holy Land through visits to the Christian congregations in the Holy Land and the receiving of visitors from the Holy Land.
- All expressions of anti-Arab and anti-Jewish prejudice in our culture and among Christians should be deplored.
- Israeli settlements in the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem are illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace as is the Israeli wall/fence/barrier which should be removed where it violates Palestinian territory.
- There must be an equitable sharing of resources such as water.
- Termination of the policy and practice of terrorism by any constituency of the Palestinian Authority.
- Assurance of human rights for Palestinians and Israelis.
- Supports the return of sovereign control of Gaza's airspace and coastline and borders to the Palestinian people and mutual respect for borders.
- Hamas to recognize the State of Israel, renounce violence, and accept past peace agreements.
- Directs the Social Responsibility in Investments Committee to engage in dialogue with and, where appropriate, to file shareholder resolutions with companies which operate in the Occupied Territories, in which the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) owns shares and whose products or services contribute to violence against either side, or contribute to the infrastructure that supports and sustains the Occupation, such as settlements and their bypass roads, the security barrier where it is built on Palestinian land, and demolition of Palestinian homes.
- Recommends that bodies of the Episcopal Church with investment assets join with other religious organizations, denominations and institutions in investing in the economic infrastructure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

For an index of resolutions on Israel/Palestine passed by the General Convention of The Episcopal Church at its triennial meetings and links to the full documents, see:

http://archive.episcopalchurch.org/globalJustice/109339_107632_ENG_HTM.htm

Between 1976 and 2007, the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church has issued a number of resolutions pertaining to peace-making in the Holy Land. These can be found by entering “Israel” and “Palestine” in the search function on the following site:

http://www.episcopalarchives.org/e-archives/executive_council/