

## Resolution on U.S. Government Aid to the State of Israel

WHEREAS the State of Israel, in its occupation of Palestinian territories, is not granting the Palestinian people their rights under international law established by the Fourth Geneva Convention: full access to water, food, shelter, medical and educational services; and

WHEREAS the United Nations has determined that Israeli settlements are illegal under international law because they violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the transfer of the occupying power's civilian population into occupied territory;<sup>1</sup> and

WHEREAS Israel, in violation of the 1993 Oslo Accord's call for a two-state solution to the conflict, continues on Palestinian land to build illegal settlements, erect a separation wall, deny free movement to Palestinians, and maintain a blockade of the Gaza Strip; and

WHEREAS Israel continues to undermine peace negotiations by announcing new settlement construction and building more settlements on Palestinian land, with more than 700,000 settlers in the West Bank as of March 2015,<sup>2</sup> living in more than 125 Israeli-approved settlements and 100 "settlement outposts,"<sup>3</sup> and

WHEREAS the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in assembly in 2005 adopted "Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine," to build "a movement that will strengthen the resolve of political leaders to find a peaceful and just solution in the Holy Land" (I.A)<sup>4</sup>; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the La Crosse Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, meeting in Assembly, urges the Congress of the United States to make future U.S. aid to Israel contingent on Israel's halt to all settlement-building in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem); and be it further

RESOLVED that members of our synod's congregations be encouraged to contact their Congressional Representatives and Senators, asking them to apply this condition to future U.S. aid to Israel.

The Middle East Subcommittee will provide information and resources for this advocacy on the synod website.

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<sup>1</sup> Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 49: <https://www.icrc.org/ihl/WebART/380-600056>

<sup>2</sup> Jerusalem Post, March 3, 2015: <http://www.jpost.com/National-News/Housing-minister-sees-50-percent-more-settlers-in-West-Bank-by-2019-352501>

<sup>3</sup> B'Tselem, The Israel Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories: <http://www.btselem.org/settlements/statistics>

<sup>4</sup> Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine: [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PNW\\_Strategy.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PNW_Strategy.pdf)