



CANADIAN
UNITARIAN
COUNCIL

CONSEIL
UNITARIEN
DU CANADA

NAME OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION: Human Rights in Palestine and Israel

PROPOSERS: Joy Johnston (Comox), Christine Johnston (Victoria), Anita MacLean (Ottawa), and the requisite 25 individuals who are members of at least three different member congregations located in at least three of the four CUC Regions, as required under Category E of the CUC Resolutions Process.

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DATE: December 2013

Background

1. Since 1948, when Israel declared its independence, there has been conflict between the new state and the Palestinians who occupied lands of the British Mandate established by the League of Nations in 1923. The history of the conflict between the two, which lasts to this day, is the result of the history of those early years. Britain was unable to broker any agreement and relinquished the mandate to the United Nations. Strong Zionist lobbying accompanied the recognition of the new state of Israel by the United Nations.
2. In 1967 the Israeli Defence Forces occupied the Gaza Strip, the area on west bank of the river Jordan and the Golan Heights. This was an ad hoc military decision which was not ordered by the Israeli government but has become a fait accompli ever since.
3. The continuing occupation means that generations of Palestinian children have grown up seeing their neighbourhoods patrolled by IDF soldiers in full battle gear, carrying loaded weapons at the ready. At night these same troops may drive into villages in heavy armoured vehicles, causing much noise and disturbance. Homes are entered with impunity, with ensuing damage and often a father or brother removed to detention.
4. In daylight hours everyone, from elementary school children to their grandparents, have to negotiate checkpoints to go about their daily life. This affects education, health care, work, and family relationships. Nearby Israeli settlements are known to harass schoolchildren, uproot olive trees and flood Palestinian cropland with sewage waste.
5. The occupied areas, except the Israeli settlements, are governed by Military Law and persons of all ages are charged in Military Courts. Zionist settler adults and children never experience military justice as they are governed by Israeli civil law.



AS UNITARIANS WE AFFIRM:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person, justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and the goal of world community with peace liberty and justice for all.

Guided by these principals we have a history of promoting justice.

- a. We marched with Dr. Martin Luther King in Selma.
- b. We supported persons with gender differences to be treated equally before the law
- c. We have joined the path of Truth and Reconciliation with our First Nations as they seek to heal the intergenerational wounds of the Residential School system.

Our denomination here and abroad has previously spoken to this matter:

Unitarian Universalist Association of the United States - Resolutions

The U.U.A. has adopted the following resolutions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict:

- 1982 Business Resolution
- 1982 General Resolution
- 1990 Action of Immediate Witness
- 2002 Action of Immediate Witness

Rev. Bill Sinkford, Past President of the Unitarian Universalist Association, issued a pastoral letter regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on March 27, 2002.

Two hundred and forty-two Unitarian Universalist ministers signed a petition for Peace in the Middle East on March 10, 2002, while attending the Convocation of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association in Birmingham, Alabama. Details are available at [UUs for Justice in the Middle East](#).

United Kingdom General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

- 2004 Resolution for the support of Human Rights of Palestinians. Details at [Unitarians in Britain](#).

Canadian Unitarian Council

- 2002 Resolution to end the Occupation of Gaza and the West Bank. Details available at [Canadian Unitarian Council](#).

Canadians Unitarians for Social Justice

- 2013 position paper on Israel and Palestine. Details are available at [Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice](#).



Therefore it be resolved that:

1. The CUC establish a Study Group - *Human Rights in Palestine and Israel* - to assemble information and resources to enable congregational study about the history of the conflict in Palestine and Israel, and the present conditions which prevail in the state of Israel including the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank.
2. Member congregations be encouraged to undertake this study during 2015 about the conditions in Palestine and Israel.
3. The Study Group members shall be: Christine Johnston (First Victoria), Joy Johnston (Comox Valley), Anita MacLean (First Ottawa). Other members may be recruited to provide quality input to the process.
4. The Study Group shall be prepared to propose a motion on the subject for the 2016 AGM.



ACTION PLAN FOR PROPOSERS: Human Rights in Palestine and Israel

An Action Plan accompanies each proposed resolution, outlining action steps that might be necessary to implement the resolution. This is to provide delegates with a clear idea of the resources that might be involved, and how much staff and volunteer time needs to be allocated.

The Proposers suggest the following actions to support the implementation of the resolution, if approved by delegates at the Annual General Meeting:

| PROPOSED ACTION | DETAILS | WHO IS RESPONSIBLE | SUGGESTED COMPLETION DATE |
|--|--|--|--|
| For proposer of resolution /Human Rights for Palestine & Israel Study Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study proposal. Detail outline for study process.• Prepare lists of print, media and speaker resources.• Design questions/study plan and reporting document for congregational use.• Send to congregations• Present Interim Report | Proposers Joy Johnston, Anita MacLean, Christine Johnston | Nov 2014 Nov 2014 Nov 2014 Jan 2015 May 2015 |
| For CUC | Help with contacting congregations & sending out information | CUC SR & Admin staff | <i>As needed</i> |
| For Member Congregations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold consciousness raising sessions for members Jan – Dec 2015 on Israeli/Palestinian history and present situation.• Report back to monitoring group | Social justice committees or whoever is interested in leading such | Jan – Dec 2015 Dec 2015 |