

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UCC 35th General Synod Adopts "Declaration for an End to Genocide in Palestine," Citing U.S. Complicity and Reaffirming Stance against Anti-Semitism

KANSAS CITY, MO – July 16, 2025 – The United Church of Christ Movement for Palestinian Solidarity (UCC MPS) is pleased and encouraged that the United Church of Christ (UCC) 35th General Synod, meeting in Kansas City, overwhelmingly adopted the ["Declaration for an End to Genocide in Palestine."](#) This landmark resolution marks a pivotal moment in the denomination's ongoing commitment to justice and peace in the Holy Land.

The resolution was submitted by the Southwest Conference and authored by the Rev. Sabrina Jennings. It was introduced by the Rev. Emma Loeme, a delegate from the Kentucky Indiana Conference who said: "The Gospel calls us to name injustice, to walk alongside the oppressed and to act when human dignity is denied. This is what this Resolution seeks to do. Declaration for an End to Genocide in Palestine is not an abstract policy statement. It is a moral and spiritual response to a catastrophic reality, one unfolding before our eyes and affirmed by international human rights bodies, ecumenical partners and our Palestinian Christian siblings." Loeme stated, "This is not simply a conflict, it is a devastation and this resolution names this violence for what it is: Genocide. And, it calls the church to respond with clarity, courage and care."

The Declaration cited findings from the International Court of Justice, Genocide Watch, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Further amplifying the urgency of the resolution and quoted during its debate was Professor Omar Bartov's guest essay calling the events in Gaza a genocide, published in the New York Times the morning the resolution was considered. (*"I'm a Genocide Scholar. I Know It When I See It."* – NY Times July 15, 2025).

The resolution noted the complicity of the United States government in enabling these actions, by providing approximately \$34 billion in arms to Israel between October 2023 and March 2025 and naming that at least 69% of Israel's arms imports come from the US. The resolution also asserted that these arms shipments violate the federal Leahy Law which prohibits the U.S. Government "from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violations of human rights (GVHR)."

During the robust deliberations, delegates affirmed the resolution's theological commitments, emphasizing that all people are made in the image of God and rejecting any justification of violence by faith. The resolution builds upon decades of UCC statements and resolutions, notably drawing on the [2021 Declaration for a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel](#). It reinforces the denomination's consistent stance for human rights and international law and reaffirms the United Church of Christ's longstanding condemnation of anti-Semitism.

Testimony from the floor was emotional and wide-ranging. Particularly poignant was the testimony of delegate Jerry Locula from Minnesota who said:

"When I see the tears of the people of Gaza, I see the tears of Black Americans. When I see the tears of the people of Gaza, I see the tears of Native Americans. And in these tears, I see the tears of God. The world has abandoned the people of Gaza like in 1994 when the world abandoned the people of Rwanda. On a daily basis, the genocide in Gaza has been implemented by American taxes. Do we feel guilty of this? Every aspect of international humanitarian law has been frustrated in Gaza, and we are called to be the church."

In closing her introduction, Rev. Loeme stated: "Passing this resolution says we will not look away; we will not be silent; we will speak the truth in love; we will follow Jesus who blesses the Peacemakers and draws near to the suffering." After two amendments from the floor failed, the resolution was approved as proposed with a 90%+ majority, with 594 delegates voting in favor, 32 against, and 14 abstaining on July 15, 2025.

Mayadah Tarazi from the YWCA Palestine expressed deep gratitude for the resolution's passage, noting, "The genocide is ongoing, resulting in approximately 70 lives lost daily in Gaza." She conveyed hope that the church would now move "from words to action through advocacy, divestment, education, and solidarity."

As for actions, the Declaration says:

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all settings of the United Church of Christ be encouraged to receive this Resolution as a prophetic call and commit to:

1. Stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people and to denounce the ongoing genocide, whether that be through the context of public witness, legislative advocacy, legal action, or non-violent direct action.
2. Call on our government to cease providing financial sponsorship, military arms, and political cover to the State of Israel for acts of genocide.
3. Denounce hate and violence in all its forms including that rooted in Islamophobia, anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab bias, and antisemitism, as contrary to the teachings of Jesus and the love of God for all humanity.
4. Share this declaration, pray, and speak and within our congregations and communities about the genocide in Palestine."

The video of the full discussion and voting on the resolution can be found [here](#).

About the United Church of Christ Movement for Palestinian Solidarity (UCC MPS):

The United Church of Christ Movement for Palestinian Solidarity (UCC MPS) is comprised of dedicated UCC members and clergy committed to advocating for justice and peace in Palestine. UCC MPS operates independently and is not an official affiliate or entity of the United Church of Christ denomination. We seek to support and encourage the actions of UCC congregations and members to discern their vision for peace and justice and act accordingly to end the suffering of so many. For more information find us at www.uccmps.org

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