

## **Notice of Motion 2025/201: Palestine**

Following the presentation by Bishop Christian Alsted to the Presbyteral Session of the Conference on 26 June in which representatives were reminded that “reconciliation includes naming evil and good, wherever it is found” (quoting Miroslav Volf), we draw the Conference’s attention to the recent statement from the World Council of Churches released on 24 June 2025:

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 18-24 June 2025, gathers in deep lamentation and outrage as the crisis in Palestine and Israel escalates to levels that flagrantly violate international humanitarian and human rights law as well as the most basic principles of morality.

We recognize a clear distinction between the Jewish people, our siblings in faith, and the acts of the Government of Israel, and we reaffirm that the WCC stands firm against any kind of racism, including antisemitism, anti-Arab racism, and islamophobia. However, the unbearable suffering inflicted on the people of Gaza, and the escalating violence and oppression in the West Bank and in Jerusalem compel the global fellowship of churches to speak with clarity, urgency, and commitment to the principles of justice under international law and ethics.

The Government of Israel’s military campaign in Gaza has entailed grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention which may constitute genocide and/or other crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Simultaneously, the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem continue to experience intensified violence, illegal settlement expansion, and systemic human rights violations.

These actions defy international legal norms, including the United Nations Charter, the Geneva Conventions, international human rights treaties, and numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. The World Council of Churches reaffirms its long-standing commitment to inter-religious dialogue and cooperation, and to international law as a framework for peace, justice, and accountability.

In this spirit, the WCC Central Committee calls for:

**Naming the Reality of Apartheid:** We recognize and denounce the system of apartheid imposed by Israel on the Palestinian people, in violation of international law and moral conscience.

**Implementing Sanctions and Accountability:** We call on states, churches, and international institutions to impose consequences for violations of international law, including targeted sanctions, divestment, and arms embargoes. Full support must be given to the International Criminal Court and UN mechanisms investigating potential war crimes and crimes against humanity.

**Affirming Palestinian Rights and Freedom:** We uphold the inalienable human rights of Palestinians to freedom, justice, return, and self-determination. We demand the

end of the occupation and the lifting of the unlawful blockade on Gaza. Support for the resilience and witness of Palestinian Christian churches and communities, upholding their right to remain on their land and to freely practice their faith.

We commend the leadership of the South African government in seeking justice and accountability to international law through the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and urge all states to comply with the ICJ's rulings.

Churches worldwide are called to witness, to speak out, and to act.

(<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/statement-on-palestine-and-israel-a-call-to-end-apartheid-occupation-and-impunity-in-palestine-and-israel>)

We ask the Conference to welcome and endorse this statement from the WCC, and to encourage all Methodist churches, Circuits, Districts, and connexional bodies to be similarly bold in their solidarity with the Palestinian people:

- 1) to name the Reality of Apartheid
- 2) to implement Sanctions and Accountability
- 3) to affirm Palestinian Rights and Freedom
- 4) to support the resilience and witness of Palestinian Christian churches and communities

**Proposed:** The Revd Stephen Ingrouille

**Seconded:** Deacon Angleena Keizer

(Signed by 8 other members of the Conference)

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. The Revd Ian Rutherford     | 5. The Revd Dr Janet Corlett   |
| 2. The Revd Grace Cauldwell    | 6. The Revd Joanna Rand        |
| 3. The Revd Julia Skitt        | 7. The Revd Dr Jongikaya Zihle |
| 4. The Revd Dr Rajbharat Patta | 8. The Revd Helen Kirk         |

### Impact Assessment

What are the benefits of the proposal and how will they be measured?	<i>This is part of living-out what it means to be a "justice seeking church"</i>
Why is the proposal a particular priority for the Church at this particular time?	<i>Particular priority of being justice-seeking as part of our Methodist identity has been discerned and agreed at previous conferences.</i>  <i>Conference 2025 has the opportunity to respond quickly to this important statement from the WCC at this particular time meeting as it gathers just one week after its release.</i>
What are the financial implications of the proposal including both the implementation costs and the ongoing	<i>None.</i>

costs and where will this be funded from?	
Are there any Equality Impacts as a result of this proposal which will require mitigation or management?	<i>None.</i>
What is the impact on the workload of local churches and circuits?	<i>None.</i>
What is the impact on the workload of the Connexional Team? Has it been agreed with the Connexional Secretary that the proposal can be incorporated into the workload of the Team?	<i>None.</i>

### **Comments from the Conference Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

The committee discussed that the Methodist Church is part of the World Council of Churches and it is therefore possible to see the impact of this encouragement is something that the churches, Circuits and Districts should already be considering. The committee therefore makes no further comment.