

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

To the Venerable, the 139th General Assembly:

This report begins with a biblical reflection. It is followed by three sections. The first section is a response to Overture No. 9, 2012 re matters relating to the occupation of the West Bank (A&P 2012, p. 525). The second section is a response to a motion from the 138th General Assembly (2012) to “consider ways of giving practical effect to the Assembly’s motion regarding the rejection of Christian Zionism” (A&P 2012, p. 35). The final section reports on the church’s participation in a dialogue with Goldcorp regarding the impact the Marlin gold and silver mine has on communities near the mine. The Marlin mine is in Guatemala.

### **BIBLICAL REFLECTION**

“Our stewardship calls us  
to explore ways of love and justice  
in respecting God’s creation and  
in seeking its responsible use for the common good”  
(Living Faith 2.4.2)

In Genesis we read of Abraham and Sarah’s journey out of their ancestral lands. On this journey they stopped for a time in the land of Gerar where they attracted the attention of King Abimelech who desired to take Sarah as his wife. He was about to do so, when God interceded. In a reconciling act of peace, Abraham and King Abimelech made a covenant. King Abimelech said to Abraham: “God is with you in all that you do; now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my offspring, or with my posterity, but as I have dealt loyally with you, you will deal with me and with the land where you have resided as an alien.” And Abraham said, “I swear it” (Genesis 21:22-24). Abraham and King Abimelech promise to deal justly with one another. They find a way to live side by side in the land, despite their differences.

The first challenge to their loyalty was an argument over a well that Abimelech’s servants had seized from Abraham. The two parties carefully negotiated a settlement. From this story we learn that God cares about the land. Today this same land continues to be a place where access to resources is a source of conflict. Discussions and negotiations to live peaceably with our neighbours have always been the responsibility of people of faith. Our relationships with our neighbours matter to God, whether we find ourselves in the Holy Land, or in the mineral rich lands of Central America. Abraham and Abimelech recognized God’s presence with them, and were guided into a relationship based on peace and sharing of resources. As Abraham and Abimelech resolved their differences, both were blessed by God and received God’s favour through water and the prosperous bounty of the earth.

Abraham blessed his covenant with King Abimelech by calling on the name of “El Olam” the Everlasting God. We continue to pray in the name of the Everlasting God, and we trust that God has blessed and tended to our relationships across the ages. Just like Abraham, God calls us to be peacemakers. The ministry of reconciliation (being in right relationship with God, and with our neighbours) guides our actions in the world, even, and especially, when there is conflict.

**OVERTURE NO. 9, 2012** (A&P 2012, p. 525)

**Re: Matters relating to the occupation of the West Bank**

## **Introduction**

Overture No. 9, 2012 asks for consideration of three issues: 1) that “General Assembly (again) urge the federal government to introduce a certification of origin provision so as to ensure that Israeli products produced in territories occupied since 1967 are excluded from the Canada Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA)” – this would prevent products produced in the Israeli settlements in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights benefiting from the CIFTA but not prohibit them from access to the Canadian market; 2) that the General Assembly “declare its support for nonviolent resistance to Israel’s continuing occupation of the West Bank including selected and targeted boycott, divestment and sanction campaigns; and 3) that the Government of Canada be encouraged to revoke the charitable status of organizations funding programs and activities in settlements in the West Bank.

The 134th General Assembly (2008) endorsed KAIROS’ policy which opposes a general boycott of Israeli products and sanctions against Israel (A&P 2008, p. 18). This report to the 139th General Assembly builds on and is consistent with statements and policies approved by previous General Assemblies – namely Israel’s right to live in peace and of an independent Palestinian state. We echo the prayer of the Psalmist who called for neighbours to live in peace (Psalm 122:6-9):

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:  
‘May they prosper who love you.  
Peace be within your walls,  
and security within your towers.’  
For the sake of my relatives and friends  
I will say, ‘Peace be within you.’  
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,  
I will seek your good.

## **Contemporary Context**

The International Affairs Committee commented on the Israel-Palestine conflict in its report to the 135th General Assembly (2009), written following the election of President Obama to his first term. The report expressed the hope that President Obama would give impetus to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Regrettably, that hope has not been fulfilled. Four years later, the peace process is inactive.

Beginning in Tunisia in December 2010, there have been profound changes in the Middle East as diverse organizations and movements challenge autocratic and authoritarian regimes. This upheaval, now referred to as the Arab Spring, spread to Egypt, several countries in the Gulf, Libya, and most recently to Syria. There have been prolonged protests in other countries, such as Bahrain. The revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt succeeded in overthrowing regimes that had been in power for years, but democratic institutions in these countries are weak. In Libya, outside intervention was required to unseat Colonel Ghaddafi, but conflict continues in areas around Benghazi. In Syria, a brutal civil war between the opposition forces and the regime of President Assad continues. To date, over 70,000 people have been killed in this brutal conflict. There is a risk that the conflict in Syria will spill over into Lebanon. There is mounting evidence that Hezbollah, the largest Shiite organization in Lebanon, is assisting the Assad regime which has channeled military and other equipment from Iran to Hezbollah (Filkins 2013).

However, a looming question overshadows the Arab Spring. In the upheaval that has accompanied these changes, radical Islamic movements (such as the Salafism and other fundamentalist Islamist entities) in a number of countries appear intent on imposing their values on all citizens. It is not clear that the changes spreading across the Middle East will result in institutions that safeguard human rights, especially the rights of minorities.

In Egypt, the Islamic Brotherhood, long an underground movement that opposed the previous regimes has won several elections and appears determined to impose its values on Egyptian society. It faces growing opposition from different movements, including those committed to building a democratic culture and democratic institutions.

Under its new president, Mohammed Morsi, Egypt has begun to play a different role in the region. While President Morsi is respecting the peace treaty with Israel, Israel can no longer take Egypt's support for granted.

At its best, the Arab Spring gives hope that change is possible and that it can lead to the development of a vibrant civic culture and democratic institutions. However, that hope is tempered by the fact that peaceful protests have often led to a violent response not only by the old regimes, but by the new ones as well.

Hamas, the Palestinian party that controls Gaza, is an offshoot of the Islamic Brotherhood. President Morsi played an important role in brokering a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel after the most recent outbreak of hostilities in October 2012. Hamas emerged from this conflict with enhanced prestige among Palestinians and increased recognition in the Arab world and beyond.

A month later, Hamas' rival, the Fatah party, which forms the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, applied to the United Nations to raise Palestine's status to that of a "non-member observer state". Its application was approved by a large majority of the United Nations General Assembly on November 29, 2012. Led by Israel, the US and Canada, nine countries voted against it on the grounds that the Palestinian Authority's "unilateral action" undermined the formal peace process. From the perspective of the Palestinian Authority, this vote gives Palestine de facto recognition of statehood by the world community. Within days of the vote at the United Nations, the Israeli government announced that it would build 3,000 new housing units in the West Bank. Some of these houses will be in the district known as "E1", east of Jerusalem and very close to a large existing settlement. If these housing units are built there will be a solid line of settlements from the Jordan River to Jerusalem cutting the West Bank into two sections. The hope for a viable contiguous Palestinian state side by side and at peace with Israel, would be seriously diminished. The United States and the European Union have protested the plans for E1.

The peace process has been frustrated for years by the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank. The settlements have grown significantly in recent years under the government of Prime Minister Netanyahu and are steadily eroding contiguous Palestinian territory. The Palestinians have stated that all settlement expansion must be halted before they will resume negotiations. The Government of Israel has rejected this condition, arguing that the Palestinians are at fault for the suspension of talks because they have set pre-conditions.

The situation appears bleak. Those with the power to bring about a resolution – on all sides – seem to be content to manage the crisis from day to day rather than commit themselves to the difficult task of assisting Israel and Palestine to reach a mutually acceptable agreement.

Relations between Israel, led by a right-wing coalition headed by Benjamin Netanyahu, and its principal ally, the United States, have been cool since the election of President Barack Obama. Personal relations between the leaders have been tense at times. Nevertheless, the American president has been constrained by the overwhelming support for Israel in Congress. As a result, while continuing to give rhetorical support to the peace process leading to a two state solution, the Obama Administration has focused on other challenges. This has enabled Prime Minister Netanyahu, urged by elements of his coalition, to push ahead with settlements.

Recent political developments in both countries suggest a more fluid situation. In the United States, President Obama has won a second term in office. Now that he is not facing an election, he may press Israel harder, at least on the settlement question. More significantly, as this report was being written, an election with surprising results occurred in Israel.

In the January 2013 Israeli elections, Prime Minister Netanyahu's coalition lost eleven seats. His right wing coalition controls 60 of the 120 seats in the Knesset. A secular centrist party, Yesh Atid (Hebrew for The Future), won 19 seats, with the result that the centre-left parties may be in a stronger position than they have been for a number of years. To form a government, Prime Minister Netanyahu must seek support from at least some of these moderate parties. It remains to be seen what a coalition government will look like, and if the strength of the pro-settlement parties will be diluted. Reviving the peace process was not an issue in the elections.

Palestinians are not confident there is much support in Israel for negotiations that will require concessions. Nevertheless, the election results may indicate that the secular majority has grown impatient at the power given to the Orthodox minority to shape Israeli policy. One of Yesh Atid's policies is to eliminate many of the exemptions and subsidies granted to the haredim (a form of Orthodox Judaism). As this report was being written, a new coalition had not been formed in Israel.

In November 2009, a group of Palestinians issued a document called "Kairos Palestine – A moment of truth: faith, hope and love – a confession of faith and call to action from Palestinian Christians". It was subsequently endorsed by a number of Christian leaders in Palestine. Kairos Palestine invites Christians around the world to the Holy Land to "come and see" for themselves. It calls on "churches and Christians around the world...to work for a just peace in our region (and to) resist theologies that justify crimes perpetrated against our people and the dispossession of the land" (Kairos Palestine 2009). This call has resonated with many churches.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee invited the church to comment on the Kairos Palestine document. A response was prepared and adopted by the 137th General Assembly (A&P 2011, p. 268-71). The Presbyterian Church in Canada invited Nora Carmi, one of Kairos Palestine's leaders to the 138th General Assembly (2012). A number of Presbyterians have responded to the call to "come and see", and have returned to witness to what they have seen.

### **International Humanitarian Law**

There are several articles in the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Regulations which specify the role and responsibilities of an occupying power. According to these articles, the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, sections of the separation barrier built on Palestinian territory, and Palestinian land appropriated for the building of by-pass roads, are illegal.

An occupying power may not move its citizens into occupied territories (Fourth Geneva Convention Article 49), destroy or seize private property (Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 53 and Hague Regulations, Article 46), or undertake permanent change in occupied territories, unless due to military needs, or unless undertaken for the benefit of the local population (Hague Regulations, Article 55).<sup>1</sup> The Israeli settlements in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Golan Heights violate the Fourth Geneva Convention and Hague Regulations. Israeli and foreign companies operating in the settlements are in contravention of international law (Crawford 2012).

There are 320,000 Israeli Jews who live in 121 settlements in the West Bank. A further 200,000 Israeli Jews live in East Jerusalem. There are 105 outposts built after 1991 in the West Bank without authorization by the Israeli military administration.

### **Obstacles to accessing land and resources and its impact on the Palestinian economy**

There are 2.62 million Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The workforce of about 745,600 people (2010) is involved in agriculture, light industry and services. The unemployment rate is between 17 and 23 percent<sup>2</sup> and there is significant underemployment. Restrictions to movement and access to land have severe consequences on the development of the Palestinian economy. Some of these impacts are explored below.

### **The Separation Barrier**

In the past decade, over 700 kilometres of the separation wall has been built by the Government of Israel to deter suicide attacks. Eighty-five percent of the barrier is built inside the West Bank. Palestinian farmers have had access to their fields restricted. In some cases they have lost their means of livelihood (B'Tselem 2011).

### **By-Pass Roads**

The Government of Israel has built about 795 kilometres (2005 statistics) of modern highways known as 'by-pass roads' (so named because they were built on agricultural land appropriated from Palestinians but by-pass Palestinian communities) that link the settlements to each other and to Israel proper. There is no Israeli legislation prohibiting Palestinian use of these roads. Instead, the Israel Defense Forces arbitrarily decides on Palestinian use of these roads (B'Tselem 2004).

### **Barriers to Land Access**

As set out in the Oslo Accord<sup>3</sup>, the West Bank has three sections (Areas A, B and C). Area A covers 18 percent of the West Bank and is controlled by the Palestinian Authority. It is largely towns and cities. Area B covers a further 18 percent of the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority retains administrative control while security is controlled by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

Area C covers 60 percent of the West Bank. It is entirely controlled by Israel. 150,000 Palestinians (United Nations 2010) and 300,000 Israeli settlers live in Area C (United Nations 2011). It includes most of the Jordan Valley, where much of the agricultural sector is based. The approximate value of agricultural goods produced by Israeli settlements in the Jordan valley is \$128 million USD per year representing a potential loss of income to Palestinian farmers (Tonutti 2013, 11).

Olive harvesting makes up 14 percent of agricultural income in the occupied Palestinian Territories and provides a livelihood for 80,000 Palestinian families. In 2012 more than 7,500 olive trees belonging to Palestinians were destroyed or damaged by Israeli settlers and the number of barriers to accessing farmlands increased. In 2011, 42 percent of applications for permits for Palestinians to access their olive trees behind the separation wall submitted prior to harvest time were rejected (United Nations 2012).

### **Barriers to accessing water**

Access to and control of water is a contentious issue. Eighty percent of the aquifers are found under the West Bank and the remainder under Israel proper. Israel uses over ninety percent of the water available to greater Palestine leaving the Palestinian areas with the remainder (Frederiksen 2005).

Israel has integrated the West Bank water supply system and all the water-related data into Merokot (Israel's National Water Company). Merokot installs the water systems to the settlements and to Palestinian towns and villages but discriminates sharply between the two populations' (Selby 2006, 2). Pipes going to Palestinian reservoirs are smaller and have a narrower gauge than those going to Israeli settlements. Soon after the 1967 war, differential pricing structures for the two populations was instituted. Israel uses more than 80 percent of the only aquifer supplying the West Bank, meaning Palestinian access is restricted to 20 percent:

The Mountain Aquifer is the only source for water for Palestinians in the West Bank, but only one of several for Israel, which also takes for itself all the water available from the Jordan River. While Palestinian daily water consumption barely reaches 70 litres a day per person, Israeli daily consumption is more than 300 litres per day, four times as much. In some rural communities Palestinians survive on barely 20 litres per day, the minimum amount recommended for domestic use in emergency situations. (Amnesty International 2009)

Water management remains under Israeli control. The scarcity and high price of water increases the price of food. In early September 2012, there were violent demonstrations by Palestinians against the Palestinian Authority against the high price of food and other basic necessities in the West Bank (Shiyoukhi and Hadid 2012).

“The total measurable cost of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian economy in 2010 was USD \$6.897 billion; a staggering 84.9% of the total Palestinian GDP in 2010” (Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem 2011, II). The costs include direct costs, e.g. higher prices for water, electricity and transportation, and indirect costs borne by the Palestinian economy due to the restrictions placed on the Palestinian Authority by Israel. Indirect costs include the foregone revenues that could have been realized from, for example, the exploitation of Dead Sea minerals, quarry stones and water if barriers to trade and commerce had not been imposed by Israel.

Israel's restrictions on the movement of people and goods, along with the restriction of access to land and natural resources isolates and severely limits economic development of the Palestinian economy. Without international aid, the economy of the West Bank would be much weaker than it already is.

### **Trade Relationship with Israel and the Palestinian Territories**

Canada and Israel signed the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA) that came into effect January 1, 1997. Bilateral trade between Canada and Israel in 2011 was \$1.382 billion (approximately \$400 million in Canadian exports and \$980 million in imports to Canada). Canada's main exports to Israel are machinery, electrical machinery, paper and newsprint, plastics, wood, and aluminum. Canada's major imports from Israel are electrical machinery, pharmaceutical products, precious stones and metals, machinery, organic chemicals and optical equipment. The CIFTA includes provisions whereby Canada grants duty-free access to Israeli exports of cut roses, fresh cherry tomatoes, fresh lettuce, fresh peppers, prepared tomatoes and tomato juice, frozen baby carrots, cubed Ein Dor melons in syrup and other food preparations (A&P 2009, p. 294).

In February 1999, the Government of Canada entered into the Joint Canadian-Palestinian Framework for Economic Co-operation and Trade between Canada and the Palestinian Liberation Organization on Behalf of the Palestinian Authority which extends the preferential tariffs available under CIFTA, to goods produced in the West Bank.<sup>4</sup> According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics bilateral trade between Canada and the West Bank was estimated at \$4.2 million USD in 2011.

### **Trade, aid and the Palestinian economy**

Developing a strong Palestinian economy, international aid and trade with the Palestinian companies are inseparably linked. The World Bank has stated that stimulating private sector development is key to building a stronger Palestinian economy and is necessarily linked with the lifting of Israeli restrictions to Palestinians' movement and access to resources (World Bank 2012, ii).

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has a five-year \$300 million development program in the Palestinian Territories. The goals of this program are consistent with those set by the Palestinian Authority Development Plan and include: economic growth, food security (children and youth) and reform and strengthening of the justice system.

One of the anticipated results of CIDA's program is "establishing a better legal and regulatory frame work for business and improved trade competitiveness of Palestinian firms" (Canadian International Development Agency 2013) and lists as an expected target that a minimum of 327 companies will increase their competitiveness and market access (Canadian International Development Agency 2009, 6).

#### **Recommendation No. 1** (adopted, A&P 2013, p. 22)

That the Moderator write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs inquiring what measures Canada takes to persuade Israel to lift the restrictions it places on the movement of people and goods that hamper economic development in the West Bank.

### **Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement and Certificates of Origin**

A certificate of origin states where products are made or produced. It is used, for example, by the European Union in its free trade agreement with Israel to distinguish settlement products so that they are excluded from receiving preferential tariff treatment.

CIFTA includes all areas which fall under Israeli customs laws (CIFTA 1997, article 1.4(1)(a)). This includes Jewish settlements. In its agreement with Israel, the European Union does not

recognize the settlements as part of Israel, and so does not extend preferential tariffs to settlement products. CIFTA makes no such distinction.

One possible barrier to Canada attempting to unilaterally enact a similar requirement is that it could be interpreted as an arbitrary measure and therefore run contrary to the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (a World Trade Organization agreement to which both Canada and Israel are accountable in the event of a trade dispute). This does not, however, prohibit bilateral negotiations with Israel. This would rely on Israel's willingness to re-negotiate relevant sections of the CIFTA.

In a response Overture No. 6, 2007, which included a statement on certificates of origin and the CIFTA, a recommendation was adopted by the 135th General Assembly (2009) that the Moderator write to the Government of Canada urging the Government to introduce a certificate of origin requirement to ensure that goods produced in Israeli settlements do not receive preferential treatment under CIFTA (this would not prohibit their access to the Canadian market). A letter was received from then International Trade Minister, the Hon. Stockwell Day, but did not address certificates of origin. This may be indicative of the Government's reluctance to highlight this discrepancy between the CIFTA and the government's official policy of calling for a withdrawal of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

**Recommendation No. 2** (adopted, A&P 2013, p. 22)

That the Moderator write to the Minister of International Trade inquiring if the Canadian government is willing to request that Israel re-negotiate relevant sections of the CIFTA so that goods include a certificate of origin and that goods from the settlements are excluded from beneficial tariff treatment.

This recommendation would not prevent settlement goods from entering the Canadian market.

**Settlement products available in Canada**

Israel has established a system of elaborate incentives to attract industry to the settlements including tax deductions, low rent, and lax enforcement of environmental and labour protection laws. These industries provide some employment for Palestinians but Palestinian workers are still subject to the harsh vetting and permit regimes of Shabak (Internal security services). The following is an incomplete list of products from the settlements that are available in Canada.

**SodaStream carbonated beverage products**

SodaStream manufactures equipment and supplies for making carbonated beverages at home. One of the principle manufacturing facilities is located in the settlement of Mishor Adumin, east of Jerusalem (Who Profits? 2013). SodaStream products are exported under the label "Product of Israel". These products are available at Canadian Tire, The Bay, Sears and many other retail outlets.

**Ahava beauty products**

Ahava manufactures cosmetic products such as skin creams using minerals from the Dead Sea. The company factory is located in the Mitzpe Shalem settlement and is partially owned by this settlement and Kalia settlement (Who Profits? 2012). Ahava exports their products under the label "Product of Israel". These products are available at retail outlets such as The Bay and Sears.

## **Keter Plastic**

Keter Plastic products are used to make toolboxes, outdoor patio furniture, storage sheds, storage bins, bathroom products, planters, and many other plastic products. Keter Plastic has two manufacturing plants in the settlements, one in the Barkan Industrial Zone and a second in the settlement of Oranit (Who Profits? 2010). These products are available at Canadian Tire, Home Depot and other major retailers.

## **Wineries**

The Tishbi, Binyamina, Teperberg 1870, and Barkan Israeli wineries have vineyards or source grapes from vineyards in Israeli settlements for some of their wines. These products are available in many provincial liquor stores (Who Profits? 2011).

This information is provided for Presbyterians who wish to know more about products from the settlements and available on the Canadian market.

## **Information on Companies and Church investments**

A number of Canadian companies invest in Israel. The focus of this section is companies in the defence or communications and security sectors that make products which may be used in conflict situations and where human rights are violated. In its 2009 report to the General Assembly, the International Affairs Committee compiled information from other denominations (such as The Presbyterian Church (USA) and the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church) that are involved in dialogues with corporations regarding their economic activities in Israel, and from ecumenical partner organizations with expertise in peace and human security issues (such as Project Ploughshares). The list included 20 companies that were involved in defence related activities or in communications technologies. Based on information published since 2009, that list has been updated. It includes Canadian and American corporations (or companies with Canadian or American subsidiaries). There are 17 companies on the list.

Presbyterians may wish to find out if they own shares in any of these companies and write to them requesting information about company policies to ensure that their products are not used in situations where human rights are violated.

1. Pratt & Whitney Canada<sup>7</sup>
2. Presagis<sup>7</sup>
3. Alliant Techsystems, Inc.<sup>6</sup>
4. Boeing<sup>6</sup>
5. General Dynamics<sup>6</sup>
6. General Electric<sup>6</sup>
7. ITT Corporation<sup>5,6</sup>
8. L-3 Communications<sup>5</sup>
9. Lockheed Martin<sup>6</sup>
10. Northrop Grumman<sup>6</sup>
11. Raytheon<sup>6</sup>
12. United Technologies<sup>6</sup>
13. Motorola<sup>6</sup>
14. Caterpillar<sup>5,6</sup>
15. MacDonald Dettwiler & Associates<sup>7</sup>
16. Elbit Systems LTD (Israel)  
Subsidiary: Elbit Systems of America<sup>7</sup>
17. Terex Corporation<sup>6</sup>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has shares in the US parent companies General Electric (GE) and Caterpillar.

The 135th General Assembly (2009) adopted a recommendation that the Moderator write to General Electric concerning reports of the apparent use of the Apache helicopter against civilians in Gaza on January 7, 2009. GE manufactures Apache helicopter engines for the Israeli government (A&P 2009, p. 18).

Caterpillar machinery has been used by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in the demolition of Palestinian homes (Garwood 2010). The IDF contracted Caterpillar to produce the Armored D9 and D10 dozers. This is an armoured variation of the traditional bulldozer. It is deployed by the Engineer Corps of the IDF. The demolition of Palestinian homes violates the Fourth Geneva Convention.

**Recommendation No. 3** (adopted, A&P 2013, p. 22)

That the Moderator write to General Electric and Caterpillar requesting information on corporate policies to ensure their products are not used in situations where human rights are violated.

**Financially supporting activities in the settlements and Canadian charitable receipts**

If Canada recognizes that the settlements violate international law, should Canadian organizations that fund activities in the settlements be able to issue charitable receipts?

It is unclear if the Canada Revenue Agency permits organizations to issue tax-deductible receipts for donations to programs in the Jewish settlements in the West Bank. The International Affairs Committee could not identify Canadian organizations that explicitly support the settlements.

At least two organizations, The Hebron Fund<sup>8</sup> and The One Israel Fund<sup>9</sup>, in the United States raise funds for the settlements. It is permissible under US legislation to issue charitable tax receipts for activities deemed charitable in the settlements. The Government of Norway is addressing this issue.<sup>10</sup>

**Recommendation No. 4** (adopted, A&P 2013, p. 24)

That the Moderator write to the Commissioner of the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to inquire if CRA policies permit Canadian charities to issue tax receipts for donations that support programs in the Jewish Settlements in the West Bank.

**Conclusion**

This report does not call for a general boycott or sanctions against Israel. The recommendations, taken together, suggest peaceful action for change. As Christians, we are connected to the land in which our Saviour lived and carried out his ministry. Jesus' teachings – and our calling to how we live out our faith in the world – are rooted in the great commandment – to love God above all else, and to love our neighbours as ourselves. When human dignity is diminished or when human rights are violated, the church is called to respond. Christ brings hope; all things are made new and we are empowered to work for a ministry of reconciliation based on right relationships, justice and peace. We pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and the peace, safety and wellbeing of all people who live in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

**Recommendation No. 5** (adopted, A&P 2013, p. 24)

That the prayer of Overture No. 9, 2012 re matters relating to the occupation of the West Bank be granted in terms of the above report.

## End Notes

1. The full text of the Fourth Geneva Convention is available at [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org).
2. Organizations such as the World Bank and the CIA (World Fact Book) report different unemployment levels. The numbers fall within this range.
3. The Oslo Accord was signed by representatives of the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1993.
4. Correspondence with the Hon. Stockwell Day, then Minister of International Trade, December 1, 2009.
5. The Presbyterian Church (USA), 2012. "2013 General Assembly Divestment List". Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, Presbyterian Church (USA), [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org) (accessed March 11, 2013).
6. New England Conference of the United Methodist Church. April 21, 2010. "Company Summaries: Companies that support the Israeli Occupation of Palestinian Land". Divestment Task Force, New England Conference of the United Methodist Church. [www.neumc.org](http://www.neumc.org) (accessed March 11, 2013).
7. Project Ploughshares. 2012. "Canadian Military Industry Database Report".
8. [www.binamica.com](http://www.binamica.com).
9. [www.oneisraelfund.org](http://www.oneisraelfund.org).
10. As of January 1, 2012, the Ministry of Finance in Norway, can remove organizations from the list of organizations approved for tax-deductible gifts if the organization is providing funding to settlements. The decisions stated that their intention is to ensure that the system of charitable tax deductions does not benefit organizations that actively support or contribute to acts that are in contravention of international law.

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——— "Keter Plastic". July 14, 2010. [www.whoprofits.org](http://www.whoprofits.org) (accessed March 2, 2013).

——— "SodaStream (The Soda Club Group)". February 20, 2013. [www.whoprofits.org](http://www.whoprofits.org) (accessed March 2, 2013).

World Bank. "West Bank and Gaza Towards Economic Sustainability of a Future". April 2012.

World Trade Organization. "Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization". 1994.

#### **ADDITIONAL MOTION (A&P 2012, p. 35)**

#### **Re: Effects of Assembly's rejection of Christian Zionism**

The 138th General Assembly (June 2012) approved a statement on Christian Zionism prepared by the International Affairs Committee in co-operation with the Committee on Church Doctrine. This amended recommendation was adopted by General Assembly:

With an acknowledgement of the complexity of issues faced by the people of the Middle East and, in particular, by the people of Israel and the Palestinian territories, we, the 138th General Assembly affirm the right of the State of Israel and the people of Palestine to exist in peace and security while we reject Christians Zionism as a doctrinal

stance inconsistent with Reformed doctrine and its emphasis on one covenant of grace for all peoples, and that we acknowledge the message of Palestinian sisters and brothers in Christ that Christian Zionism poses a significant obstacle to a just peace between Israelis and Palestinians. (A&P 2012, p. 35)

An additional motion was made stating: “That the International Affairs Committee be instructed to consider ways of giving practical effect to the Assembly’s motion concerning the rejection of Christian Zionism, and report back with recommendations to the 139th GA (2013).” This is the International Affairs Committee’s response.

## **Introduction**

The Statement on Christian Zionism prepared by the International Affairs Committee and the Committee on Church Doctrine is a critical appraisal of Christian Zionism. (A&P 2012, p. 289-92) The statement concludes that Christian Zionism is inconsistent with Reformed theology and is an ideology that does not contribute to peace with justice between Israel and Palestine.

Jesus’ Great Commandment, to love God and to love our neighbours as ourselves, is essential for all of God’s people and especially for the peace and security of Israel and for the creation of a viable independent Palestinian state – two countries living in peace, with justice, as neighbours.

The following suggestions are intended for Presbyterians who wish to learn more about Christian Zionism.

## **Learn about Christian Zionism**

Presbyterians are invited to read the Statement on Christian Zionism (A&P 2012, p. 289-92). Also see the suggested reading list at the end of this report on p. XXX.

## **Invite a Speaker**

Since 2011 a number of Presbyterians have travelled to Israel and Palestine who can bring first-hand information to a congregation or group. In October 2011, the Moderator of the 137th General Assembly led a delegation to Lebanon, Israel and Palestine. There have been two mission exposure visits organized by Education for Mission. A number of Presbyterian young adults have participated in annual youth conferences organized by Sabeel: Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre. Several Presbyterians have participated in the World Council of Churches’ Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel ([www.eappi.org](http://www.eappi.org)).

Many of these participants would be pleased to speak about their experiences. International Ministries can identify a speaker in your area.

## **Planning a visit to the Holy Land**

Meet with Israeli and Palestinian Human Rights Organizations

There are many organizations in Israel and Palestine which welcome visitors. If you are planning a visit to the Holy Land, take time to meet with one or more of the following:

- Israeli organizations involved in monitoring and reporting on the treatment of Palestinians by Israeli troops, police or Jewish settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

- Israeli Jewish, Christian and Muslim organizations working together.
- In the West Bank, meet with Palestinian human rights and development organizations.

Justice Ministries can provide contact information for organizations in Israel and the West Bank committed to peace with justice.

### Sunday Worship

Whether you are in Israel or the West Bank, attend Sunday worship with Palestinian Christians. The service may be in Arabic, but you will be warmly received by worshippers. This will be an opportunity to worship with the Living Stones, as Palestinian Christians refer to themselves.

### Palestinian Hospitality

If you are planning to visit Holy sites in the West Bank such as the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem or elsewhere, arrange to stay in the West Bank. As a guest staying in hotels or guest houses you will be contributing to the economy of the West Bank. The United Nations estimates that the unemployment rate in the West Bank is 17 percent which does not take into account the large number of people who are underemployed (Haaretz 2012).

### Pray

Pray for Israelis and Palestinians committed to non-violent action and for peace with justice in the Holy Land.

### A Reading List on Christian Zionism

Discussions of Christian Zionism on the theological level have little significance if the large majority of Canadian Presbyterians do not recognize the term or how it influences some popular literature written for Christian readers. Those responsible for church libraries might be surprised at how many assumptions implicit in Christian Zionism are found in some of the best-sellers on their shelves. The International Affairs Committee suggests reading these books, particularly those relating to the “end times”, with this question: does the author equate the Biblical “people of Israel” with the modern political state of Israel? If this is the case, readers are likely to be influenced by beliefs which our church has stated are contrary to Reformed doctrine.

### Resources

This list suggests books for those wishing to know more about Christian Zionism and its impact on the peoples living in the Holy Land.

#### Introductory Resources

Gushee, David P. and Stassen, Glen H. “An Open Letter to America’s Christian Zionists”, on [justpeacemaking.blogspot.com](http://justpeacemaking.blogspot.com) (19 September 2011). The Just Peacemaking Initiative website is hosted by Fuller Theological Seminary [fuller.edu](http://fuller.edu).

International Affairs Committee, The Presbyterian Church in Canada. “Christian Zionism – Implications for Peace and Justice between the Jewish and Palestinian Peoples”. Acts & Proceeding of the 138th General Assembly – The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 2012, p. 289-292.

Weaver, Sonia; commissioned by the Mennonite Central Committee. "What is Israel-Palestine? Answers to Common Questions". Waterloo: Herald Press, 2007.

Presbyterian Church (USA). "The Cradle of Our Faith: The Enduring Witness of the Christians of the Middle East". Louisville: PC(USA), 2008.

For Further Study

Aldrovandi, Carlo. "Theo-Politics in the Holy Land: Christian Zionism and Jewish Religious Zionism". *Religious Compass*, 5.4 (2011), p. 114-128.

Ateek, Stifan Naim. *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008.

Ateek, Stifan, Naim. Cedar Duaybis; Maurine Tobin (Editors). *Challenging Christian Zionism*, Melisende, 2005.

Beinart, Peter. *The Crisis of Zionism*. New York: Times Books/Henry Holt and Co., 2012.

Burge, Gary M. *Jesus and the Land: The New Testament Challenge to "Holy Land" Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.

Chacour, Elias with Alain Michel. *Faith Beyond Despair: Building Hope in the Holy Land*. Norwich, UK Canterbury Press, 2008.

Chapman, Colin. "Premillennial Theology, Christian Zionism, and Christian Mission". *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 33.3 (July 2009), p. 137-144.

Gorenberg, Gershom. *The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount*. Diane Publishing Company. 2000.

May, Melanie A. *Jerusalem testament: Palestinian Christians Speak, 1988-2008*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010.

Sizer, Stephen. *Christian Zionism: Road Map to Armageddon*. Leichester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004.

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*Haaretz*. "Discrimination against Arab women". October 12, 2012. [www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com)

**Recommendation No. 6** (adopted, A&P 2013, p. 24)

That the above report be the response to the Additional Motion re effects of Assembly's rejection of Christian Zionism.

**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REC. NO. 2, 2011** (A&P 2012, p. 279, 25)

**Re: Shareholder Dialogue with Goldcorp (Marlin mine, Guatemala)**

**Background information**

In reports to the General Assembly in 2011 and 2012, the International Affairs Committee commented on the impact of the Goldcorp-owned Marlin gold and silver mine in Guatemala. (A&P 2011, p. 289-91, A&P 2012, p. 278-79) The mine is controversial and has raised questions regarding the social and environmental impact it has on several Indigenous communities. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has partners that report being impacted by the mine. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a shareholder in Goldcorp. In June 2012, the 138th General Assembly approved this recommendation: “that, in partnership with other organizations, Justice Ministries engage in dialogue with Goldcorp and report back to the 139th General Assembly.”

In the fall of 2012, The Presbyterian Church in Canada joined a dialogue organized through SHARE: Shareholder Association for Research and Education ([www.share.ca](http://www.share.ca)), a Vancouver-based organization that conducts shareholder engagement on behalf of its clients.

The report on the dialogue is a summary of four questions from shareholders to Goldcorp pertaining to particular aspects of corporate social responsibility initiatives at the Marlin Mine.

### **Dialogue summary**

Goldcorp shareholders initiated dialogue with its predecessor company, Glamis, in 2006 because of concerns about the company’s social and environmental record. Today, approximately 50% of Goldcorp’s gold production comes from Canada, 33 percent from Mexico and 8 percent from Guatemala (Marlin mine). The dialogue was initiated as a result of conflicts between the company and local community members who live near the Marlin Mine in Guatemala. The mine has been dogged by claims that prior consultation was insufficient to allow informed public scrutiny or debate, a view that was confirmed by a review by the International Finance Corporation’s Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO) in 2005. Since then, SHARE has engaged Goldcorp on behalf of shareholders. A visit to the site by shareholders occurred in 2008.

At the urging of shareholders, Glamis and Goldcorp have taken several important steps, including:

- implementing International Cyanide Management Code certification (cyanide is used in the gold extraction process);
- training security personnel to reduce risk of violent confrontation and provide general human rights training across the company, including the Marlin mine;
- completing and making public an independent Human Rights Assessment of the Marlin mine overseen by the company, concerned shareholders and a mutually agreeable third party from Guatemala;
- creation of a grievance process for workers and communities affected by the mine; and
- hiring of staff at the company’s head office as well as at the local and regional levels to manage corporate social responsibility.

Despite these steps, social and environmental impacts remain a concern for investors. The focus of SHARE’s dialogue in 2013 will include:

- impact of leadership change at the company’s head office in the area of corporate social and environmental responsibility;
- follow-through on effectiveness of grievance process, including disclosure of outcomes;
- transparency of water quality and quantity information for communities near the Marlin Mine;
- community engagement in closure planning at the Marlin Mine; and

- disclosure of information about labour rights and labour rights training.

The dialogue with Goldcorp will continue in 2013-2014. The International Affairs Committee will report to the 140th General Assembly on the progress of this dialogue.

The purpose of this dialogue (and of dialogues with corporations generally) is to encourage the corporation to strengthen its commitment to safeguarding human rights and protecting the environment through sound policies and practices. Shareholders have an important responsibility to actively engage with a corporation on corporate accountability issues.

## **APPRECIATION**

Dr. Marjorie Ross and Mrs. Joan Hilliard have completed two three-year terms and are going off the committee. Their work is appreciated.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT**

### **ARMS TRADE TREATY PASSED AT UNITED NATIONS**

On April 2, 2013, the General Assembly of the United Nations approved, by an overwhelming majority (155 votes “yes” and 3 votes “no”), the text for a historic global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Project Ploughshares along with many organizations around the world have been working to secure such a treaty for almost twenty years.

The treaty is a new instrument of hope for the millions of people and thousands of communities across the world suffering from or threatened by armed violence. A core goal of the treaty is to reduce human suffering. Implementation of the treaty will achieve this. The Arms Trade Treaty would enshrine in a new international law, a set of clear rules for the cross-border transfers of weapons and ammunition.

It creates binding obligations for governments to assess arms transfers to ensure that weapons will not be used for human rights abuses, terrorism, transnational organized crime or violations of humanitarian law. The Treaty requires that governments refuse any transfer of weapons if there is a significant risk that they will be used to violate human rights or commit war crimes. The Treaty includes measures for risk assessment. Before the Arms Trade Treaty, each state set its own rules for transferring arms. The Treaty creates universal standards that all Treaty ratifying states must follow. Countries that do not ratify the Treaty are not obliged to follow it.

With the UN General Assembly voting in favour of the Treaty, it must enter into force as soon as possible. This requires that 50 states sign and ratify the Treaty. On June 3, 2013, member states will have an opportunity at the United Nations in New York to sign the Treaty.

Once a member state has signed the Treaty, it must then review its laws to ensure they do not conflict with the Treaty. The next step is for the member state’s national legislature to ratify the Treaty. Once 50 countries have ratified the Treaty, it comes into force.

Over the years, the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada has stated its support for measures to reduce conflicts including a reduction in the global arms trade. Through mission staff and programs supported by International Ministries and PWS&D respectively, the

church is aware of the impact of conflict on development. Peace is an essential ingredient if there is to be any meaningful development.

**Recommendation No. 7** (adopted, A&P 2013, p. 24)

That the Moderator of the 139th General Assembly write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs congratulating the Government of Canada for voting in favour of the Arms Trade Treaty and urge the Government to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty by December 31, 2013.

**Recommendation No. 8** was reworded and adopted, A&P 2013, p.24

By consensus, the word “signing” was replaced by the words “voting in favour” so that the recommendation was adopted as follows:

That the 139th General Assembly encourage sessions, presbyteries, presbyterials and individuals to contact Members of Parliament to congratulate the Government of Canada for voting in favour of the Arms Trade Treaty and to urge the Government of Canada to sign the Treaty and to submit the Treaty to Parliament for ratification by December 31, 2013.

Dawn Griffiths  
Convener

Stephen Allen  
Secretary