

**RESOLUTION OF WITNESS:
Declaring Israel an Apartheid State
and the Central Pacific Conference Apartheid-Free**

**BROUGHT BY THE CPC PALESTINE/ISRAEL NETWORK (CPC PIN)
A WORKING GROUP OF WIDER CHURCH MINISTRIES**

Biblical Grounding:

Jesus said, "Peace be with you."

We believe that "you" means all of us.

As followers of Christ, the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ is committed to the witness and work of peace throughout the earth.

Peace means freedom.

Peace means justice.

Peace means equality.

Apartheid is antithetical to peace.

Jesus worked to confront and dismantle oppressive systems through his ministry and prophetic witness. He was always trying to break the barriers that divide people into castes. These divisions harm the vulnerable, poor, sick, and shunned outcasts. They are unhealthy and destructive for the powerful. Jesus worked to build the beloved community God seeks for us.

Whereas:

We recognize the Jewish people have suffered horrific trauma due to the Holocaust and antisemitic attacks through the centuries and currently. Trauma experienced does not give anyone the right to abuse others.

Whereas:

We believe Israel has a right to exist securely and to live in peace.

We believe Palestinians have a right to exist securely and to live in peace.

Whereas:

We acknowledge that the United States has our own sin of apartheid through the state-sanctioned treatment of Native Americans, African Americans, and Japanese Americans. We repent and seek to heal these wrongs.

Whereas:

We acknowledge that the United States has often failed to welcome immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers to our land of plenty, instead allowing racism and xenophobia to lead our policies and actions.

Whereas:

All U.S. aid to Israel is military aid, not humanitarian aid. Our tax dollars are being used to support oppression of the Palestinians through military occupation by an apartheid regime.

Whereas:

Apartheid literally means “apartness, apartheid, separateness.” Apartheid is a legal term which derives its meaning from international law, specifically from the *International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid*. This United Nations treaty has been in force since 1976 with 110 participating countries. The convention makes apartheid a crime against humanity and defines it as “establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them.” Israel fits this definition by intent, systematic oppression of Palestinians, and by inhumane acts against them. Many Israeli laws, policies, and actions toward the Palestinian people reflect a system of apartheid including:

- Threat to life, liberty, and dignity through torture, cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment by the Israeli government, military occupation of the West Bank, and settlers;
- Use of color-coded ID’s to limit rights, ability to work, and movement of Palestinians;
- Establishing two sets of laws, and unequal treatment under the law for Israelis and Palestinians. Palestinians live under military law and Israelis live under civil law, setting up unequal treatment;
- Palestinians in military court face a nearly 100 percent conviction rate. Settlers enjoy virtual impunity for criminal acts against Palestinians, and the army systematically fails to intervene;
- Arbitrary arrest and illegal imprisonment of Palestinians including teens and children frequently without legal representation;

- Having one's home demolished or living under threat of having one's home demolished;
- Demolition of schools and bombing of hospitals;
- Denial of the right to leave and to return to one's country;
- Denial of the right to a nationality for certain Palestinians causing statelessness with no ID, driver's license, or bank account;
- Denial of family unification based on residency;
- Limits to the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- Creating separate enclaves and refugee camps for members of a racial group blocked by the Wall and checkpoints;
- Theft of clean water. Denial of electricity, and sanitation services;
- Creating separate and unequal roads and highways for Palestinians and Israelis;
- Committing war crimes under international law by creating Israeli settlements in the West Bank;

Whereas:

We have read, heard, and seen in the media the conditions of apartheid. We have heard the witness of our Palestinian and Israeli siblings who have witnessed and lived with the conditions of apartheid. Many of us have visited Palestine and witnessed the conditions of apartheid. Based on all we have seen and heard, Israel is an apartheid state.

Whereas:

We affirm this statement from UCC General Synod resolution from 2021: "We reject any laws and legal procedures which are used by one race or religion or political entity to enshrine one people in a privileged legal position at the expense of another, including Israel's apartheid system of laws and legal procedures." (pg. 5 lines 195-197)

Whereas:

We are compelled to raise our voices of conscience especially in light of other voices who support Israel with no mention of the plight of our Palestinian siblings who cry out for our help.

Whereas:

The American Friends Service Committee and denominational faith leaders authored *The Apartheid-Free Pledge*. More than 145 organizations have adopted this pledge including the national setting of United Church of Christ, other denominations, many faith communities, Jewish Voice for Peace, and Human Rights Watch.

Therefore be it resolved:

We urge the United States to suspend aid to Israel until the government of Israel ceases its military occupation, settler colonialism, and functioning as an apartheid state.

Therefore be it resolved:

That the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ adopt the Apartheid-Free Pledge which reads:

The Apartheid-Free Pledge

We affirm our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people;

We oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and

We declare the Central Pacific Conference apartheid-free and to that end,

We pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation.

Go to Apartheid-Free.org for a list of possible Apartheid-Free actions.