

KAIROS WORKS FOR PEACE IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

1) KAIROS affirms the right of Israel to be a secure and independent state, and recognizes the importance of Israel to Jewish people who have suffered so terribly from anti-Semitism. KAIROS also recognizes the suffering of the Palestinian people, and affirms their right to a secure and viable state. KAIROS calls for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian Territories and a return to June 4, 1967 Israeli and Palestinian borders.

2) Does KAIROS support Boycott/Divestment and Sanctions against Israel?

In January 2008, KAIROS approved for its members Economic Advocacy Measures: Options for KAIROS Members for the Promotion of Peace in Palestine and Israel.

This is not a list of decided actions by our members, but suggested options from which they will select what is most appropriate for them.

The strategy recommends against a general boycott of Israeli products or services in Israel, or the use of sanctions against Israel.

With regard to divestment, the paper recommends that KAIROS member churches and organizations that have not already done so consider adopting socially responsible investment screens that exclude investment in weapons manufacturers, military suppliers, and banks or corporations that abet violence anywhere in the world.

From a faith-based perspective, economic advocacy measures are ways to align our actions as consumers and investors with our moral and spiritual values. Many Palestinians believe economic and consumer action could help bring about positive change in the Middle East.

This paper recommends three kinds of action: educate church membership on the conflict in Palestine and Israel; promote fair trade olive oil and other products from the Occupied Palestinian Territories; and highlight Canadian economic relationships with illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

KAIROS will help our member churches with research if they choose to learn which products for sale in Canada are produced in Israeli settlements in Occupied Palestinian Territories. This could allow for letter writing to corporations, meetings with distributors or suppliers of products, or help churchgoers and other Canadians make faithful, responsible choices about whether they wish to buy such products.

Groups around the world use consumer choices and economic decisions to press for justice, and this is not new. Labeling such groups or actions as anti-Semitic when they are focused on a just peace in the Israel and Palestine appears to be an effort to silence democratic dissent.

3) Does KAIROS single out Israel for criticism on human rights? No. KAIROS supports the existence of Israel as a state and its right to peace and security. It criticizes human rights violations of governments and others in areas in which KAIROS has experience, expertise and partners whose work we support. Our human rights work includes issues in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Philippines and Colombia as well as the Occupied Palestinian Territories. KAIROS also calls on the Canadian government to address human rights of Indigenous peoples and migrant workers in Canada.

4) Does KAIROS Policy on Israel Palestine reflect the core policy of the Canadian government? Yes

For Canadian Policy on Key Issues in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict see the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade as of Feb 26, 2011

http://www.international.gc.ca/name-anmo/peace_process-processus_paix/canadian_policy-politique_canadienne.aspx?lang=eng

For KAIROS Policy see KAIROS policy on Israel Palestine, 2002

<http://www.kairoscanada.org/en/rights-and-trade/focus-countries/palestine-israel/mid-east-policy/>

4.1 Two-State Solution

KAIROS: A sustainable and just peace requires the recognition and implementation of the Palestinians right to self-determination, including their right to establish a sovereign Palestinian state. It also requires the recognition of Israel's existence as a sovereign state.

Canadian government: ...Canada recognizes the Palestinian right to self-determination and supports the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, democratic and territorially contiguous Palestinian state, as part of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement

...Canada is committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, including the creation of a Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel.

4.2 Borders of Israel and Palestine

KAIROS: We call for the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. These resolutions require Israel to withdraw to its borders as they were on June 4, 1967. It also requires Arab countries and other parties to accept Israel within those borders.

Israel must completely withdraw from all territories occupied since 1967. This must include an evacuation of all Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

Canada: Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over territories occupied in 1967 (the Golan Heights, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip).

...As referred to in UN Security Council Resolutions 446 and 465, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.

...Canada recognizes Israel's right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks, including through the restriction of access to its territory, and by building a barrier on its own territory for security purposes. However, Canada opposes Israel's construction of the barrier inside the West Bank and East Jerusalem which are occupied territories. This construction is contrary to international law under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

...Canada not only opposes Israel's construction of a barrier extending into the occupied territories, but also expropriations and the demolition of houses and economic infrastructure carried out for this purpose.

4.3 Refugees

KAIROS: Some form of compensation for Israel should be negotiated in recognition of the value of the evacuated housing developments that could be used to accommodate Palestinian refugees.

Given that Palestinian refugees now number in the millions, their return to Israel might seem an impossibility. Nevertheless, their *right* to return must be honoured, though its implementation could include alternatives for those refugees who would find them acceptable and fair.

Canada: ...Canada believes that a just solution to the Palestinian refugee issue is central to a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as called for in United Nations General Assembly resolution 194 (1948) and United Nations Security Council resolution 242.

4.4 Status of Jerusalem

KAIROS: The city of Jerusalem must be shared and open.

The question of Jerusalem has two dimensions: one relates to Palestinians and Israelis as nationalities; the other to Muslims, Christians and Jews as religious people. Sovereignty must be shared between the two nationalities. All faith groups must have open and free access to their holy places.

Canada: Canada considers the status of Jerusalem can be resolved only as part of a general settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli dispute. Canada does not recognize Israel's unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem.

4.5 A Common Human Rights Standard

KAIROS: Both Palestinians and Israelis must be held to a common human rights standard which includes the protection of civilians. All attacks on civilians, whether in pursuit of political ends or as a part of military operations, or for any other reason, are unacceptable and to be deplored.

Canada: We support resolutions that are consistent with Canadian policy on the Middle East, are rooted in international law, reflect current dynamics, contribute to the goal of a negotiated two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and address fairly and constructively the obligations and responsibilities of all parties to the conflict.

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