

**Minutes of the Justice Committee of the
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
The Brown Hotel, Louisville, KY
April 24, 2014**

**APRIL 24, 2014
CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Justice Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board was called to order by the Chair, Noelle Royer at 8:45 A.M. on Thursday, April 24, 2014, at The Brown Hotel in Louisville, KY. Maria Arroyo led in the opening worship and prayer.

ATTENDANCE

Those present for all or a portion of the meeting were:

Melissa DeRosia	Kears Pollock
James R. Ephraim, Jr.	Susan Osoinach
James E. Foucher, Jr.	Carmen Rosario
Mary Jorgenson	Noelle Royer

EXCUSED

David E. Ezekiel, Janet Martin, Roger Gench

***CORRESPONDING
MEMBERS***

Raafat Zaki – Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

OTHERS

Maria Arroyo – Mission Agency Staff, World Mission Ministry
Hunter Farrell – Mission Agency Staff, World Mission Ministry
Sara Lisherness – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
Bill Somplatsky-Jarman – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
Champaka Srinivasan – Mission Agency Staff, World Mission Ministry
Tonia Trice – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
Greg Allen-Pickett – Mission Agency Staff, World Mission Ministry
Terri Bate – Mission Agency Staff, Funds Development Ministry
Amgad Beblawi – Mission Agency Staff, World Mission Ministry
Shannon Beck – Mission Agency Staff, World Mission Ministry
Bob Brashear – Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association
Ellen Pearre Cason – Audit Committee, Tax Justice Task Force
Toni Carver-Smith – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
Roger Dermody – Mission Agency Staff Deputy Executive Director for Mission
Elizabeth Terry Dunning – Mission Responsibility Through Investment
Ruth Farrell – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
Courtney Hoekstra – Mission Agency Staff, Executive Office
Carl Horton – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace & Justice

Ministry
 Rhashell Hunter - Mission Agency Staff, Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women Ministry
 Chris Iosso – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
 Joseph Johnson – Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People
 Paula Kincaid – The Layman
 Mark Koenig – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministry
 Laurie Kraus – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
 Sam Locke – Mission Agency Staff, Special Offering Ministry
 Rosemary C. Mitchell – Mission Engagement Advisor, Office of Public Witness/ United Nations
 Kristena Morse – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
 Debbie Newnum – Mission Agency Staff, Human Resources
 Sara Otoum – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
 Cynthia White – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministry
 Bryce Wiebe – Mission Agency Staff, Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry
 Richard Williams – Mission Agency Staff, World Mission Ministry
 Trina Zelle – National Organizer/Executive Director, Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA)

COMMITTEE

ACTIONS:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEM (B.100)

Noelle Royer reviewed the agenda for the meeting and the Justice Committee **VOTED** to adopt with amendments.

FEBRUARY 6, 2014 MINUTES OF THE JUSTICE COMMITTEE ITEM (B.101)

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2014 meeting.

COMMENT TO THE 221ST GA (2014) - OVERTURE 037 "ON SUPPORT FOR THE INSTITUT MÉDICAL CHRÉTIEN DU KASAI (IMCK)

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 037, "On Support for the Institut Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK) Endowment and the Endowment Concept—From the Presbytery of New Castle" to the 221st GA (2014).

Comment:

**ENDOWMENT
AND THE
ENDOWMENT
CONCEPT—
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
NEW
CASTLE”(B.102)**

The Institute Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK) is an important partner of Presbyterian World Mission. Its ministry of compassionate Christian care and training of medical professionals is greatly needed in the DR Congo where WHO health indicators are among the worst in the world with alarming rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, and maternal mortality <http://www.who.int/gho/countries/cod.pdf> In the past Presbyterian World Mission was able to provide substantial support of IMCK through the contributions of PCUSA congregations and individuals, but this support has decreased in recent years. We believe that an endowment is a faithful and effective way of addressing the pressing need for financial sustainability for IMCK. This is especially true in a country as impoverished as DR Congo which ranks at the bottom of the Human Development Index <https://data.undp.org/dataset/Table-1-Human-Development-Index-and-its-components/wxub-qc5k> where national health insurance is nonexistent and individuals cannot pay a fee for service to cover the operating expenses of the institution.

In addition to financial support PCUSA World Mission believes strongly in the “ministry of presence” to accompany our partners as they serve in Christ’s name. Financial support in itself is not enough; we have committed ourselves to providing mission personnel to serve side by side with Congolese medical professionals as they serve in one of the most difficult contexts in Africa. PCUSA Mission Co-worker Dr. John Fletcher serves at IMCK and Dr. Martha Sommers is planning to begin service later this year and other mission personnel serve on the board. In addition to support of this endowment we also encourage PCUSA to support the sending of our mission personnel.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 040
“ON TURNING
ATTENTION TO
THE PLIGHT OF
THE CHURCH
THAT IS
SUFFERING DUE
TO SECTARIAN
VIOLENCE AND
PERSECUTION IN
EGYPT AND
OTHER PARTS OF
THE WORLD—
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
PITTSBURGH”
(B.103)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 040 “On Turning Attention to the Plight of the Church That Is Suffering Due to Sectarian Violence and Persecution in Egypt and Other Parts of the World—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.”

Comment:

The suffering of the church in Egypt and other parts of the world is not only “due to sectarian violence and persecution.” There are many factors involved, including geopolitical and economic factors. The General Assembly should consider all the factors that result in and contribute to sectarian violence. For example, our mission partners in the Middle East have clearly pointed out that U.S. government policies (and Western attempts to dominate in general) affect them adversely by fueling sectarian tension. Therefore, the role of the US government (often seeking national or special interests rather than principles the US purports to support) should be addressed by the overture.

The overture names only the church in Egypt, and fails to mention the suffering of other Christian populations in the region. For example, following the 2003

American-led invasion of Iraq, more than half of the country’s Christian population became refugees. Likewise, the plight of Syrian Christians, Palestinian Christians, and others in the Middle East should not be neglected. Additionally, while the overture mentions “Other Parts of the World,” it does not consider countries outside of the Middle East, such as North Korea, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Sudan, where Christians suffer from maltreatment no less than in the Middle East.

Use of the word “persecution” mischaracterizes the nature of the maltreatment of Christians in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East, and in many cases would be an unhelpful exaggeration. At the same time, the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly maintain ecumenical and interfaith relationships and humanitarian programs that can enable efforts such as those requested by the presbyteries submitting this overture.

**PROXY VOTING
RECOMMENDATIONS
(B.104)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board:

- 1) Affirm the proxy voting recommendations of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) contained in the 2014 Shareholder Resolution Directory (Appendix 1).
- 2) Request the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation/ New Covenant Trust Company and the Board of Pensions to vote proxies on the shareholder resolutions submitted to companies in which they own stock in accordance with the recommendations listed in the 2014 Shareholder Resolution Directory (Appendix 1).
- 3) Urge the middle governing bodies, related institutions, congregations and individual members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to give serious consideration to the proxy voting recommendations when they vote on shareholder resolutions.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 055
“ON
AUTHORIZING A
CONSULTATIVE
PROCESS TO
PROVIDE
GUIDANCE FOR
THE CHURCH’S
RESPONSE TO
THE DRAMATIC**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 055 “On Authorizing a Consultative Process to Provide Guidance for the Church’s Response to the Dramatic Changes Taking Place in Cuba—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.”

Comment:

This overture displays a familiarity with the remarkably strong relationship that has remained between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbyterian Church in Cuba over the years. It recognizes the significant changes underway

**CHANGES
TAKING PLACE
IN CUBA—FROM
THE
PRESBYTERY OF
SANTA FE.”
(B.105)**

within Cuba and in that country's relations with other nations in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Europe. The overture proposes a cost-effective way to build upon the work of the Cuba Mission Network and the mission partnerships that have made our Presbyterian witness and connection so distinctive and durable. The dual consultation model is designed to include a diversity of voices framed by the mission of the church. The consultation in Cuba, to be developed with our mission partners, would be arranged by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and World Mission in full accordance with the requirements of U.S. law and the hopes of that church. As in other social witness and mission reports prepared for the General Assembly in the past, the goal is to gather faithful persons with significant experience and expertise whose prayer and reflection may help guide both our churches for years to come.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 66
“PROVIDING
TRAUMA CRISIS
COUNSELING
CONSULTATION
TO TRAIN IN
BEST PRACTICES
IN CARING FOR
SURVIVORS OF
HOMICIDE
VICTIMS” (B.106)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 66 Providing Trauma Crisis Counseling Consultation to Train in Best Practices in Caring for Survivors of Homicide Victims”.

Comment:

The Presbyterian Mission Agency, through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is already engaged in providing support to communities impacted by gun violence through its National Response Team and staff. The National Response Team and staff are skilled professionals, clergy and clinicians with expertise in responding to and supporting churches and communities who are impacted by acts of public violence.

In addition to providing initial support immediately after an event, PDA also offers emotional and spiritual care, compassion fatigue and resilience training for religious and community leaders that strengthens their capacity to equip the community to recover from the trauma of the violence.

PDA has also produced one full length award-winning documentary on gun violence, "Trigger" <http://triggerdoc.com/> and "Tapestry," <https://vimeo.com/91726932> a shorter (28 minutes) award-winning documentary on the processes of recovery and healing in communities after public violence, viewed through the lens of PDA National Response Team members who have done such responses. Both of these documentaries also have study materials designed to equip congregations and communities to engage in dialogue about gun violence.

PDA welcomes the opportunity to enhance the resilience, skills, and awareness of its mid council partners and their congregations as the PCUSA seeks to bring a healing presence and a prophetic word into the scourge of public violence afflicting our country. This could be accomplished as an invitational event through mid-councils to Stony Point or regionally, if preferred.

COMMENT TO

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following

**THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 065
“ON ENDORSING
THE WOMEN OF
FAITH FOR THE
1,000 DAYS
MOVEMENT –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
NATIONAL
CAPITOL”(B.107)**

recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 065 “On Endorsing the Women of Faith for the 1,000 Days Movement – From the Presbytery of National Capitol”

Comment:

Recognizing the importance of this campaign and the impact it has on improving the lives of women and children around the world, Presbyterian Mission Agency has formed a “1000 Days Roundtable” that includes representatives from World Mission, Racial-Ethnic and Women’s Ministries, Presbyterian Women and Compassion, Peace and Justice to encourage congregations to get involved in the campaign.

The 1000 Day Campaign reinforces and strengthens the poverty alleviation work that the PCUSA is engaged in through long term mission partnerships in Bangladesh, Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Peru, Haiti, Ethiopia, Malawi, Southern Sudan and Zimbabwe.

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/pw/justice/>

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY (2014)
OVERTURE 015
“ON ENTERING A
TWO YEAR
SEASON OF
REFLECTION ON
THE PLIGHT OF
UNWANTED
CHILDREN, AND
APPOINTING A
SPECIAL
COMMITTEE ON
ABORTING
REVIEW – FROM
THE
PRESBYTERY OF
SOUTH
ALABAMA”
(B.108)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 015 “ On Entering a Two-Year Season of Reflection on the Plight of Unwanted Children, and Appointing a Special Committee on Abortion Review-From the Presbytery of South Alabama”.

Comment:

The 217th General Assembly (2006) affirmed the monitoring report from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), which reviews the implementation of problem pregnancies and abortion policies. Presbyterian Mission Agency ministries preparing resources on problem pregnancies and abortion strive to reflect a diversity of opinion in the resources that are produced. Resources revised in 2010 prepared by Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries cover the range of faithful responses in these difficult situations, and they include: *Problem Pregnancy: When No Choice Is Easy – For the Pregnant Woman; There’s Always A Father – Does the Father Have a Problem, Too?; When Pregnancy Involves Loss - Helping Others Face Pregnancy Loss; When You Need Wisdom – Helping Others Face Problem Pregnancy.*

In 2006, the 217th General Assembly reiterated the role of the church in individual and families’ lives as they face problem pregnancy issues:

The church has a responsibility to provide public witness and to offer guidance, counsel, and support to those who make or interpret laws and public policies about abortion and problem pregnancies. Pastors have a duty to counsel with and pray for those who face decisions about problem pregnancies.

Congregations have a duty to pray for and support those who face these choices, to offer support for women and families to help make unwanted pregnancies less likely to occur, and to provide practical support for those facing the birth of a child with medical anomalies, birth after rape or incest, or those who face health, economic, or other stresses. [*Minutes* of the 217th General Assembly (2006), p. 905].

The 1992 policy states,

Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and insolvable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to address or decide each situation. Christians seek the guidance of Scripture in the midst of relationships and circumstances of awesome proportions that affect their interpretation and decision making.

We affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, in the context of their communities of faith, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies.

We call upon Presbyterians to work for a decrease in the number of problem pregnancies, thereby decreasing the number of abortions.

The considered decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy can be a morally acceptable, though certainly not the only or required, decision. Possible justifying circumstances would include medical indications of severe physical or mental deformity, conception as a result of rape or incest, or conditions under which the physical or mental health of either woman or child would be gravely threatened.

The Christian community must be concerned about and address the circumstances that bring a woman to consider abortion as the best available option. Poverty, unjust societal realities, sexism, racism, and inadequate supportive relationships may render a woman virtually powerless to choose freely [*Minutes* of the 204th General Assembly (1992), p. 368].

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) continues to be guided by the 204th General Assembly policy on abortion and problem pregnancies and encourages the church to continue to approach this challenging issue with the atmosphere of “open debate and mutual respect” for a variety of opinions (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 374].

In 2014, there were no funds budgeted in the form of grants from the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to any of the ten networks of Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association, including Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options (PARO). No funds from the PMA were given to Planned Parenthood or the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC).

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 013**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following

**“ON REVIEWING
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY
POLICY
REGARDING THE
TWO-STATE
SOLUTION IN
ISRAEL
PALESTINE—
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
SAN FRANCISCO”
(B.109)**

comment on Overture 013, “On Reviewing General Assembly Policy Regarding the Two-State Solution in Israel Palestine—From the Presbytery of San Francisco”

Comment:

PC(USA) mission partners in the Middle East agree that the current “facts on the ground” and the slim chance of success for the current peace process render a Two-State solution unattainable at the current time. It is their view that the long-standing PC (USA) policy, reaffirmed as recently as 2010, supporting a Two-State solution is unrealistic in light of the continued expansion and intractability of Israeli settlements and the obstinacy of the Israeli military occupation of Palestine.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 007
“ON TAKING
MEANINGFUL
ACTION TO
REDUCE GUN
VIOLENCE –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
NATIONAL
CAPITOL.”**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 007 “On Taking Meaningful Action to Reduce Gun Violence – From the Presbytery of National Capitol” and Overture 038 “On Gun Violence Prevention – From the Presbytery of Hudson River.”

Comment:

Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministries are engaged in addressing the issues related eradicating gun violence in the United States in response to the 219th General Assembly (2010): <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/gun-violence-gospel-values-mobilizing-response-god/> The Presbyterian Mission Agency has developed numerous resources to equip congregations to respond to concerns about gun violence. <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/gunviolence/>

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 038
“ON GUN
VIOLENCE
PREVENTION –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
HUDSON RIVER.”
(B. 110)**

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Peacemaking Program and the Office of Public Witness are working collaboratively to both raise awareness and promote the passing of common sense gun laws in local communities, states and the U.S. Congress. The promotion of effective advocacy strategies and ways that congregations can become involved in reducing gun violence are being promoted through the collaborative efforts of these three programs. The PC(USA) documentary "Trigger" is being promoted through Middle Governing Bodies, local congregations and community based organizations across the country. <http://triggerdoc.com/> A petition drive calling for Common Sense gun laws is continuing until national legislators pass common sense gun laws.

Overture 007 and Overture 38 affirm and support the work on addressing gun violence currently being done by the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 016
“ON**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the comment on Overture 016 “On Encouraging Use of the Code of Conduct for

**ENCOURAGING
USE OF THE
CODE OF
CONDUCT FOR
THE
PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN FROM
SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION. –
FROM
PRESBYTERY OF
NEW YORK CITY”
(B. 111)**

the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation. – From
Presbytery of New York City”

Comment:

This overture affirms the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and Presbyterian Women being done through the Human Trafficking Roundtable <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/human-trafficking/>. The Human Trafficking Roundtable is a collaborative programmatic effort that works to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children with ECPAT-USA (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) and ECPAT-International. This Roundtable was created in response to previous General Assembly actions calling on the church to condemn the international trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children. <http://apps.pcusa.org/ga217/business/overtures/ovt1905.htm>
<http://www.pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers/%28S%28zvdsfbe4j0l3qiatt4fkqoc%29%29/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=1539&promoid=7>

This overture asks the agencies of the church and all Presbyterians to use companies that have signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism <http://www.thecode.org/>

It also encourages the programs and ministries of the Presbyterian Church to engage in education and provide opportunities for advocacy with tourism businesses that have not yet adopted the code of conduct. There are resources available to those who would like to engage in advocacy, including a card that individuals can leave with hotels, airlines, and others in the travel industry to encourage them to sign on to the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.

<https://www.pcusa.org/blogs/swords-plowshares/2013/5/1/ecpat-code/> The PC (USA) is the first denomination to co-brand the Code of Conduct card.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 044
“ON THE USES OF
UNMANNED
AERIAL
VEHICLES
(DRONES) - FROM
THE
PRESBYTERY OF
GENESEE
VALLEY.” (B. 112)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 044“On The Uses of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones) - From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.”

Comment:

The General Assembly has addressed issues of war and peace on numerous occasions through the years. This includes speaking to specific weapons, for example land mines and nuclear weapons, and the questions about the morality of their use.

Drones represent a new technology not fully addressed in any current PC (USA) policy related to weapons of war. The adoption of this overture or the report from Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy would establish policy to guide the work of programs of the Presbyterian Mission Agency called to address these matters.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 049
“ON FOOD
SOVEREIGNTY
FOR ALL – FROM
THE
PRESBYTERY OF
GREATER
ATLANTA” (B.
113)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 049 “On Food Sovereignty for All – From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta”

Comment:

The Presbyterian Mission Agency though the Presbyterian Hunger Program offers prayer and study materials for congregations about the food system, food sovereignty and food justice at <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/foodcrisis/introductory-materials/> and <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/hunger/hunger-facts-and-materials/>.

Working with ecumenical partners, the Hunger Program produced “Food Sovereignty for All” http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/hunger/doc/food_sovereignty_for_all-php_final.pdf.

Funds from the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering support partners engaged in food sovereignty initiatives in impoverished areas in the USA and overseas <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/hunger/wai/>. These funds also connect concerned Presbyterians with international partners that have initiated campaigns on issues like land grab. <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/joininghands/foodandland/>.

This overture affirms and strengthens the current work of the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 064
“ON
DIVESTMENT
FROM FOSSIL
FUEL
COMPANIES –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
THE PALISADES”
(B. 114)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 064 “On Divestment from Fossil Fuel Companies – From the Presbytery of the Palisades”

Comment:

The Presbyterian Mission Agency, through the Environmental Ministries Office, <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/> provides Bible studies, devotionals, educational resources and advocacy suggestions, all designed to equip congregations to increase involvement in caring for God’s creation, including becoming certified as an “Earth Care Congregation” <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/>.

There are also resources available that specifically address concerns about climate change.

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/climate-change/>

The PCUSA is an active member of Creation Justice Ministries, <http://www.creationjustice.org/> an ecumenical partnership addressing climate change and other environmental concerns. The PCUSA is also founding member of Ceres, <http://www.ceres.org/> and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) <http://www.iccr.org/>. These organizations routinely review behavior of fossil fuel companies and mobilize business leadership for a sustainable world.

The Committee on Mission Responsibility through Investment (MRTI) engages corporations in support of policies and practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and works in coalition with other organizations.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 041
“ON REMOVING
CUBA FROM THE
LIST OF STATE
SPONSORS OF
TERRORISM –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
LONG ISLAND.”**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 041 “On Removing Cuba from the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism – From the Presbytery of Long Island” and Overture 048 “On Lifting All Travel Restrictions for U.S. Citizens Traveling To Cuba – From the Presbytery of St. Augustine.”

Comment:

The Presbyterian Mission Agency has been engaged in mission with church partners in Cuba since 1890. <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/global/cuba/> In 1967 the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba (IPRC) was established as an autonomous denomination. Nine presbyteries have established partnerships with the IPRC. Travel restrictions and sanctions make these partnerships more

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 048
“ON LIFTING ALL**

**TRAVEL
RESTRICTIONS
FOR U.S.
CITIZENS
TRAVELING TO
CUBA – FROM
THE
PRESBYTERY OF
ST. AUGUSTINE”
(B. 115)**

difficult.

In February 2014, the Office of Public Witness, together with Church World Service and the Latin America Working Group, hosted a delegation of ecumenical leaders from Cuba in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the visit was to advocate for normalized U.S. relations with Cuba. Removing Cuba from the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism and lifting all restrictions for both U.S. and Cuba travel were among the issues discussed in the joint deliberations with the State Department and Congressional Offices. <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2014/3/18/cuban-church-leaders-press-normalization-us/>

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 050
“ON AFFIRMING
THE
IMPORTANCE OF
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
AND THE
PRECAUTIONARY
PRINCIPLE –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
SOUTHERN NEW
ENGLAND” (B.
116)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 050 “On Affirming the importance of Sustainable Development and the Precautionary Principle – From the Presbytery of Southern New England”

Comment:

The current PCUSA policy on sustainable development, “Hope for a Global Future” <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/hope-global-future-toward-just-and-sustainable-hum/> does not fully address the Precautionary Principle lifted up in this overture.

This overture also asks that the General Assembly commission a study to review this principle and prepare a paper for use by congregations. If the Assembly affirms this recommendation, it should be referred to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy for implementation.

There would be financial implications for the commissioning of a study group and paper.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 22
“SUPPORTING
MIDDLE EAST
PEACEMAKING –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
NEW COVENANT”
(B.117)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 22 “Supporting Middle East Peacemaking – from the Presbytery of New Covenant”

Comment:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has worked in close collaboration with ecumenical partners throughout the Middle East for nearly two centuries, listening attentively to their expression of their witness, lives, hopes and needs. This overture in its Rationale and Recommendations is at sharp variance with the lived experience of our ecumenical partners in Israel-Palestine. Whether they are Palestinian citizens of Israel suffering from discrimination in almost every aspect of their lives or Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza enduring a multi-

decade military occupation and economic colonization, their reality reflects an enormous imbalance of power.

Strategies and programs seeking a just peace based on a two-state solution that fail to acknowledge and account for this reality on the ground will be ineffective if not counterproductive.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency has worked and is working to promote General Assembly policy affirming universal human rights and international humanitarian law applying the same ethical standards and moral principles to all nations. This involves public policy advocacy in international arenas such as the United Nations and domestically with the U.S. Government, economic development and humanitarian relief, and engagement with transnational corporations to conform their practices with respect for human rights, international law and economic and social justice.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 14
“DIVESTMENT
FROM
CATERPILLAR,
HEWLETT-
PACKARD, AND
MOTOROLA
SOLUTIONS -
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
SAN FRANCISCO”**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 14 “Divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions - from the Presbytery of San Francisco” and Overture 61 “Adopting the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Recommendation on Divestment – from the Synod of the Covenant”

Comment:

This overture supports the recommendation from the Presbyterian Mission Agency, approved at its February 2014 Board Meeting, calling for Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard and Motorola Solutions to be added to the General Assembly’s list of companies whose stocks and bonds are proscribed from investment (commonly known as the General Assembly Divestment List.)

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 61 ON
“ADOPTING THE
MISSION
RESPONSIBILITY
THROUGH
INVESTMENT
(MRTI)
RECOMMENDATI
ON ON
DIVESTMENT –
FROM THE
SYNOD OF THE
COVENANT.” (B.
118)**

This recommendation is based upon the comprehensive report by the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/mrti-report-and-recommendations-israel-palestine-c/> on its multi-year engagement of corporations involved in non-peaceful pursuits in Israel and Palestine as defined by the General Assembly.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

**(2014) -
OVERTURE 026
“REGARDING A
NATIONAL
MORATORIUM
ON THE
IMPOSITION OF
THE DEATH
PENALTY – FROM
THE
PRESBYTERY OF
GREATER
ATLANTA” (B.119)**

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 026 “Regarding a National Moratorium on the Imposition of the Death Penalty – From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta”

Comment:

The Presbyterian Church has opposed the death penalty by action of previous General Assemblies as outlined by this summary.

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/101/capital-punishment/>

The Office of Public Witness (OPW) continues efforts to eliminate the death penalty through active engagement in fair sentencing discussions within ecumenical and interfaith settings. The OPW is connecting to grassroots communities that are organizing around these issues as a majority of the efforts to eliminate the death penalty are taking place in local communities and at the state level.

This recommendations outlined in this overture affirm current policies and raise the visibility of this issue.

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 30
“CALLING FOR A
BOYCOTT OF
ALL HEWLETT-
PACKARD
PRODUCTS –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
NEW
BRUNSWICK” (B.
120)**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 30 “Calling for a Boycott of All Hewlett-Packard Products – from the Presbytery of New Brunswick”

Comment:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has historically supported boycotts as a non-violent economic strategy to counter unjust practices and/or promote social change.

These efforts have included boycotting table grapes and fast food companies on behalf of farm workers, Nestle for selling infant formula in the developing world, and J.P. Stevens sheets and towels to support textile workers.

Most recently, the 220th General Assembly (2012) endorsed the consumer boycott of all Israeli products coming from the Occupied Palestinian Territories. <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mrti/boycott/>

**COMMENT TO
THE 221ST GA
(2014) -
OVERTURE 068
“ON HELPING TO
REMEDY THE
TRAGIC
CONDITIONS IN**

The Justice Committee **VOTED** to approve the following recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 068 “On Helping To Remedy the Tragic Conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – From the Presbytery of Boston”

**THE
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF
THE CONGO –
FROM THE
PRESBYTERY OF
BOSTON” (B. 121)**

Comment:

Overture 68 was drafted by the Advocacy Committee of the Congo Mission Network (a PCUSA Community of Mission Practice) with input from PCUSA partners in Congo: the Presbyterian Church of Congo, the Church of Christ in Congo and the Presbyterian Church of Kinshasa. These partners have asked PCUSA to advocate, on their behalf, for the US government to address the need in DR Congo for heightened respect of human rights and more effective governance. Our partners have specifically voiced concern for the need to address the issues of gender based violence, child soldiers, extractive industries and need for improved education. By passing this overture PCUSA would be giving voice to the concerns of our Congolese church partners and addressing the root causes of poverty which have caused this resource rich country to be at the very bottom of the Human Development Index.

**INFORMATION
ITEMS**

- A. Reviewed the agenda of the meeting and VOTED to adopt. (B100)
- B. Approved the Justice Committee Minutes of February 6, 2014 (B. 101)
- C. The Justice Committee received the following items for information:
 - Jinishian Memorial Program Strategic Plan 2014-2019 (B.200)
 - Jinishian Memorial Program United States Advisory Committee & Governance Commission Minutes, February 5, 2014 (B.201)
 - Presbyterian Hunger Program Committee Meeting – October 9-11, 2013 (B.202)
 - MRTI Update (B.203)
 - MRTI Meeting Records (B.204)
 - PHEWA Update (B.205)
 - Jarvie Commonwealth Service Committee Minutes – April 24-25, 2013 (B.206)
 - 2013 WM Fundraising Report (B.207)
 - 2013 Special Offerings Annual Report (B.208)
 - Written reports from Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association and the One Great Hour of Sharing Collaboration Team.

The Justice Committee members discussed the need to strategically think about what items of business would best serve the time spent during the board meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

Noelle Royer closed in prayer and adjourned the meeting at noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Noelle Royer, Chair

Maria Arroyo, Resource Staff

Bill Somplatsky-Jarman, Resource Staff

Tonia Trice, Recorder