

PCUSA votes to divest from Israel bonds

by [Yonat Shimron](#)

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In-person attendees at the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Salt Lake City, Utah. (Video screengrab)

The general assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) voted Monday to divest from Israel bonds and begin the process of encouraging two companies it believes are contributing to human rights abuses against Palestinians in the occupied territories to quit their practices.

Both votes were wrapped up in other legislation that passed unanimously as part of the biennial gathering of the denomination meeting online and in person in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The PCUSA, with about 8,800 churches and 1 million members, is the largest Presbyterian denomination in the US. It has been sharply critical of Israel and its

policies over Palestinians for decades. Two years ago it voted to declare Israel an apartheid state, angering the US Jewish establishment.

On Monday, the denomination also passed a [resolution](#) denouncing Christian Zionism, an ideological vision that it says links the state of Israel with biblical views of the “promised land,” and therefore justifies taking land away from Palestinians.

The [divestment resolution](#) calls on the Presbyterian Foundation and Board of Pensions to divest from governmental debt held by countries that are currently maintaining a prolonged military occupation and have been subject to United Nations resolutions related to their occupation.

Those also include Turkey and Morocco as well as Israel.

The US is the underwriter of debt securities issued by the state of Israel known as Israel bonds.

Bob Ross, a member of the steering committee of the [Israel/Palestine Mission Network](#), a Presbyterian advocacy group that supported the overture, said the network was informed that the church holds Israel bonds though he didn’t know the exact amount of the holdings.

“Addressing Israel’s prolonged occupation of Palestinian territory is especially urgent today, as it is directly connected to the devastating war in Gaza and ongoing violence in the West Bank,” the overture reads. “This resolution would prevent our church from profiting from these occupations.”

The other [overture](#) calls on the denomination to begin a dialogue with General Electric and Palantir Technologies to encourage them to end policies that it says harm Palestinians. Specifically, it contends General Electric sells fighter jet engines used by Israel’s air force.

Palantir Technologies provides Israel with artificial intelligence technology that allows Israel to surveil Palestinians. The overture directs a church group to report back to the 2026 general assembly on whether it would recommend divestment from those companies if they are not moving toward ending their military-related production.

“There is a growing consensus in the church that we shouldn’t be profiting from Israel’s human rights abuses and, frankly, genocide against Palestinians,” said Ross,

a layperson from Pittsburgh.

Another resolution that would have encouraged PCUSA-related seminaries to provide transparency around their investments failed. The resolution would have encouraged the 12 PCUSA-affiliated seminaries to follow the general assembly's investment strategies.

The seminaries are not accountable to the general assembly, said SueAnn Shiah, a student at Princeton Theological Seminary and an advisory delegate. —Religion News Service