

81st General Convention Report June 22-28, 2024

By The Reverend Canon Brian J Grieves, Alternate Deputy from Hawaii

Four resolutions acted on by General Convention emanated from the Diocese of Hawaii either directed by Diocesan Convention or submitted by Bishop Bob or members of the 11 deputies and alternate deputies who attended Convention. With great joy Queen Lili'uokalani passed on the first of two readings to be added to the book of Lesser Feasts and Fasts. An environmental resolution passed calling for the closing of the Red Hill Fuel Facility and restoration of the aina around it. And, with a rousing standing ovation by the House of Deputies, the Convention approved the addition of Micronesia (Guam and Saipan) to be part of the Diocese of Hawaii.

The fourth resolution on a ceasefire in Gaza came from a resolution at the 2023 diocesan convention which directed the deputation to submit a resolution on the unfolding carnage in Gaza, including a call for a ceasefire. I worked with other deputies to draft Resolution D013 which was submitted by Deputies Hau'oli Tomoso, Steven Costa and Mary Carpenter. The original text is [Here](#).

A total of 17 resolutions were submitted on the topic of peace and justice in the Holy Land, the cradle of our faith. D013 was rewritten largely by the Bishop of Los Angeles and was eventually adopted without proposed language that would have named Israel as an apartheid government as recognized by major human rights organizations. The opposition to the use of the term came from the House of Bishops in the face of overwhelming support from the House of Deputies. The final text of D013 can be found [Here](#)

D013 ended up as the most comprehensive of all the resolutions on the broad subject of Israeli/Palestinian peace including pursuit of a sovereign state for Palestinians alongside Israel, an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the urgent need for humanitarian aid in Gaza, adopting an Executive Council resolution from April which named "potential genocide" in Gaza, and continuation of divestment from all companies doing business in the West Bank settlements.

A resolution calling attention to genocide in Gaza was also rejected by the House of Bishops. I spoke on the floor of the House of Deputies in favor of naming genocide as existing today but the House of Deputies approved the following language in deference to the House of Bishops as adopted [Here](#)

Another resolution to acknowledge Palestinians as indigenous people was also rejected. This was an incredulous denial by the bishops of Palestinians' presence on the land since the time of Christ and before. This rejection came as the Palestinian Archbishop of Jerusalem and noted Palestinian human rights lawyer Jonathan Kuttab, and other Palestinians observed while sitting in the visitor section of the House of Bishops. I was also witness to this embarrassingly and inexplicable low moment of the Convention.

Of the 17 resolutions considered by the Convention, 9 were adopted with amendments with topics ranging from:

C002 – Responsible Travel to the Holy Land

D006 – Rejecting the Theology of Christian Zionism (after the bishops had said no to this resolution but later reconsidered)

D009 – Rebuilding Gaza

D012 – Conditioning U.S. Military Aid to Israel

D075- Release from prison Episcopalian Ms. Layan Nasir and denouncing Israel's policy of Administrative Detention without charge for indefinite periods, including children, with limited access to legal counsel and family visits.

To see all the resolutions submitted and adopted/rejected visit the virtual binder [Here](#)

Overall, there were a number of good resolutions adopted that will be helpful and directive to the Office of Government Relations as it pursues our Church's long years of advocacy for justice to prevail for both Palestinians and Israeli Jews in the land of Jesus Christ.

I also facilitated an evening discussion with Jonathan Kuttab who inspired many advocates for justice in the Holy land gathered at the Convention. And I was delighted to attend, with several other Hawaii deputies, another event hosted by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship which welcomed Hawaii priest Kerith Harding as its new Executive.

As Vice Chair of the Executive Council Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, I was privileged to help host a luncheon with the Presiding Bishop at Convention honoring Paul Neuhauser, who has served the committee for all its 53 years. A video of the history of this committee is available [Here](#) Also attending this luncheon was Nicholas Livingston, a member of the Official Youth Presence. He is a member of Holy Nativity, Aina Haina.

Finally, I thank the Diocesan Convention for its confidence in electing me as an alternate to General Convention, and add a special thanks for the hard work of our entire Deputation, and an additional mahalo for the wise and experienced leadership of our Senior Deputy Ryan Kusumoto.