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## **NEW ENGLAND TASK FORCE UPDATES DIVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Nine companies added to divestment recommendations**

LAWRENCE, Massachusetts...(June 3, 2010)... This week marks 43 years of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, which the United Methodist Church has long opposed. The New England Conference of the United Methodist Church has issued an update to its Divestment Task Force report, which outlines divestment recommendations for companies supporting the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. Nine companies have been added to the divestment recommendations published by the New England Conference in June 2007. The research of the task force has shown that each company supports the occupation in a significant way.

In addition to the 20 companies in the task force's initial report, the 2010 updated recommendations include Cellcom Israel, Cemex, Elbit Systems Ltd., Formula Systems Ltd., Hewlett-Packard, ICx Technologies, Ingersoll Rand, On Track Innovations, and Valero Energy Corporation.

The latest report and the full record of company correspondence are available at [www.neumc.org/divest](http://www.neumc.org/divest). Additional supporting documentation, including statements from Jewish organizations that support divestment, is also included.

The names of these companies were released after careful study and after giving each company a chance to respond to task force concerns. All companies included in the report met at least one of the following criteria:

- Providing support for the occupation's **infrastructure** (settlements, roads, checkpoints, or portions of the separation wall built on occupied land),
- Having a **physical presence** such as a factory or store on occupied land, or
- Providing the **Israeli military** with offensive weapons or items used to enforce the occupation of Palestinian land.

These recommendations are specific and selective and do not call for divestment from Israel, from Israeli companies, or from companies that do business in Israel. "Rather," stated Task Force Chairman William Aldrich, "we focus only on companies sustaining an occupation that damages Palestinian lives, Israeli lives, and the prospects for a just peace."

The New England Conference is one of at least ten United Methodist Annual Conferences that from 2005 to 2009 have adopted resolutions addressing some kind of divestment process consistent with the denomination's long-standing opposition of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. The work of the New England task force provides information and resources on companies supporting the occupation in a significant way.

"The United Methodist church has called for an end to the Israeli settlements on Palestinian land, and we must continue to pray for and seek an end to violence and true steps toward peace with justice," said Bishop Peter D. Weaver of the New England Conference. "The task force information will be helpful for those that voluntarily choose to divest from companies involved in activities the denomination opposes."

#### About the New England Conference.

The New England Conference ([www.neumc.org](http://www.neumc.org)) includes more than 500 United Methodist and federated congregations in Eastern Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. In July 2010, Vermont churches will also become part of the New England Conference.

#### Additional links and resources:

[www.neumc.org/divest](http://www.neumc.org/divest) - New England Conference task force web page

[http://archives.umc.org/interior\\_print.asp?ptid=4&mid=6855](http://archives.umc.org/interior_print.asp?ptid=4&mid=6855) – General Conference resolution adopted in 2004