## Divestment Vote Press Release

http://new.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/component/content/article/18/278-divestment-vote-press-release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
June 20, 2014

**221st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Votes to Endorse Selective Divestment from Israeli Occupation**

The Israel/Palestine Mission Network (IPMN) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is pleased to announce that the plenary of the 221st General Assembly has voted 310 to 303 to divest from three US companies that profit from Israel's military occupation of Palestinian lands.

"After a decade of corporate engagement with Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, these companies have failed to modify their behavior and continue to profit from Israeli human rights abuses and non-peaceful pursuits," said IPMN member Rev. Dr. Walt Davis, Professor Emeritus, San Francisco Theological Seminary. “This is a historic vote and the culmination of a long and deliberate internal process within the church."

This divestment process began in 2004, when an overture was brought from the grassroots to the 216th General Assembly in Richmond, Virginia. The Rev. Glenn Dickson of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Gainesville, Florida brought the request to the governing body before the call for BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) was issued by Palestinian civil society the following year. In 2004, the assembly also approved an overture to establish a network, IPMN, to advocate for Palestinian human rights and to educate Presbyterians about their plight. IPMN celebrates this landmark decision and is grateful for all the volunteers who have been steadfastly working with us since 2004.

“Our denomination has been a leading voice in establishing the socially responsible investment movement that began in the early 1970s to end apartheid in South Africa,” said Carol Hylkema, IPMN member and former chair of Mission Responsibility Through Investment, the committee that is tasked with shareholder engagement for the church. “This is a matter of stewardship and this decision brings our investments in line with our values.”

The General Assembly’s decision comes just over a week after the pension fund of the United Methodist Church [divested](http://ipmnpresbyterianchurchusa.cmail1.com/t/r-l-xkkgg-ilcjhktb-y/) from security firm G4S, due in part to concerns over the company's dealings with the Israel Prison Service, and a week after the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ voted to divest from companies that profit from the occupation.

IPMN reiterates its support for a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and hopes that this decision will play a small but significant part in realizing this goal.

**Press Contact:**
Rev. Dr. Jeffrey DeYoe, IPMN Advocacy Chair