

Middle East Network Newsletter - **Action Alert**

September 23, 2011

Tell the President: Say Yes to Peace, Say Yes to Palestine

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For all who care about peace in the Middle East, the spotlight now is on the UN General Assembly meeting in New York. Anticipating a Palestinian bid for UN membership, leader after leader have taken to the stage to address the question. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke to the Assembly today. This morning, President Abbas submitted an application to the UN for Palestine to be recognized as a full member state. The prospect of a bid for UN membership has provoked a recent stream of threats to Palestinian aid from Congress.

Earlier this week, ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson sent a [letter to President Obama](#) urging support for Palestinian self-determination. He wrote, "It is my hope the U.S. will act in its own best interest as well as the interest of all people in the region by not blocking the initiative to admit Palestine as a Member State of the United Nations."

He stressed the importance of our accompaniment of our Palestinian Christian sisters and brothers, saying, "Our Church's relationship with our Christian companions in the region provides me with a constant and troubling awareness of the daily suffering that persists because of the failure to resolve the conflict."

Take action now: Tell the President that as a Christian who cares about a just peace for all, you want the U.S. to support the Palestinians' quest for self-determination. Tell him you believe this is a legitimate way to pursue a just and lasting peace for the benefit of Palestinians and Israelis.

Send your message also to U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice at the UN: The Honorable Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, VIA FAX: (212) 415-4443; PHONE: (212) 415-4000.

Bishop Hanson said in his letter to the President, "The objective of the initiative at the United Nations is to achieve a two-state solution, an objective we share with your administration. We agree with your statement to the UN last year that those who seek such a solution, '...should reach for what's best within ourselves. If we do, when we come back here next year, we can have an agreement that will lead to a new member of the United Nations – an independent, sovereign state of Palestine, living in peace with Israel.'"

You can also read more about the issue in the recent [ELCA news release](#).

TAKE ACTION TODAY: Tell the President the time is now for an independent Palestine to be recognized alongside Israel. Tell him you support the non-violent approach of turning to the international forum of the UN to pursue this goal.



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