



NETWORKING THE BAPTIST FAMILY TO IMPACT THE WORLD FOR CHRIST

BWA General Council Resolution 2011.4

Resolution on the Middle East

Christ is our Peace... (Ephesians 2:14)

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia July 4-9, 2011:

REGARDS current events in various countries in the Middle East as an opportunity for peaceful positive changes in the societies, and, therefore:

CALLS for solidarity of member bodies of the BWA with all Christians in the Middle East, especially our Arab Baptist brothers and sisters, encouraging them at this time of social unrest and political uncertainty to play their part in the common longing to secure human rights, peace and respect for all people of the region;

CONDEMNS all forms of violent protest and violent repression of peaceful demonstrations during recent events in the Middle East; and expresses great concern about recent violent attacks made on Christians and Christian churches by extremist groups, especially in Egypt and Iraq, urging governments to afford full protection under law to all religious minorities, especially in places where such minorities continue to find themselves objects of discrimination;

RE-AFFIRMS the commitment in our Baptist heritage and identity to religious freedom for all, and for people of all religions to live at peace with one another in the same geographical space;

COMMENDS the "Common Word" initiative and the BWA response to it as a basis for further study, and for improving the relationship of Baptists with their Muslim neighbours in the Middle East and elsewhere;

ENCOURAGES Baptists in the Middle East to further explore how an authentic Christian witness can be made with conviction, but also with courtesy and respect, in a Muslim-majority context, commending especially the work of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut for its pioneering work in this regard;

COMMENDS those Middle Eastern Baptists, e.g. in Lebanon and Gaza, who are reaching out with humanitarian aid to meet the needs of their communities, including refugees, regardless of religion, and urges the worldwide Baptist family to support them in these endeavours;

URGES Baptists around the world to work and pray for a just resolution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine, one that balances Israel's need for security with an end to oppressive policies inflicted on the Palestinian people, and to be a strong support to the Israeli (Arab) and Palestinian Baptist Churches in the many pressures and challenges that they face;

NOTES with understanding, but concern, the significant number of Christians moving away from the Middle East because of pressures on them, and invites the BWA to explore specific ways of cooperating with Middle East Baptist conventions and unions to enable and encourage Baptist Christians to remain in the Middle East as a continuing sign and affirmation of Christian presence and witness in the region; and

CALLS BWA member bodies to informed and persistent prayer for the whole region, and an active solidarity with all the Baptist communities there.

Keywords

BWA; Gaza; Israel; Lebanon; Middle East; Muslims; Palestine; Peace; Reconciliation; Religious Freedom; Violence; War.

Citations

Original Source Bibliography: Callam, Neville, editor. *Baptist World Alliance 2011 Yearbook: Minutes of the General Council Meeting and Directory*. Falls Church, VA: Baptist World Alliance, 2011.

Original Source Footnote/Endnote: Neville Callam, ed., *Baptist World Alliance 2011 Yearbook: Minutes of the General Council Meeting and Directory* (Falls Church, VA: Baptist World Alliance, 2011), pp. 134-135.

Online Document Full Citation: BWA General Council Resolution 2011.4 *Resolution on the Middle East*; <https://www.baptistworld.org/resolutions>.

In-text Online Document Citation: (BWA General Council Resolution 2011.4).

For more information about Baptist World Alliance resolutions, visit [BaptistWorld.org/resolutions](https://www.baptistworld.org/resolutions).

Since its formation in 1905, the Baptist World Alliance has networked the global Baptist family to impact the world for Christ with a commitment to strengthen worship, fellowship and unity; lead in mission and evangelism; respond to people in need through aid, relief, and community development; defend religious freedom, human rights, and justice; and advance theological reflection and leadership development.