

Middle East Network Newsletter

February 22, 2011

U.S. casts veto on settlements resolution, Bishop Hanson responds

[More Info](#)

A proposed UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution condemning Israeli settlements as illegal was defeated on Friday when the U.S. used its veto power as one of the permanent members of the Council to vote against it. The other 14 members of the council voted in favor. ELCA grassroots advocates and others had called for the U.S. to support the resolution, and Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and leaders from 12 other Churches and church-related organizations had sent a letter to the President asking that the U.S. vote for the resolution.

See below the complete text of Bishop Hanson's statement following the UNSC vote.

Statement on United States veto of resolution on Israeli settlements

February 18, 2011

I am dismayed that the United States exercised its veto power today in the United Nations Security Council when a resolution on Israeli settlements and related matters was called to a vote.

As I and several other Christian leaders pointed out earlier this month in a letter to President Barack Obama, the resolution used language regarding the settlements employed by the United States in the past and referred to undertakings on settlement construction agreed to in the past by Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the United States.

Israeli settlements continue to expand in the West Bank despite the objections of the United States and the international community, posing, as the Obama administration has stated repeatedly, an obstacle to peace. The U.N. Security Council resolution would have powerfully underscored the international position on Israeli settlements.

The resolution also provided an opportunity to demonstrate the resolve of the international community that the parties reach a final status agreement as soon as feasible.

I now am concerned that this action will increase a despondent mood about the future of such talks and will possibly strengthen extremist voices in the region who call for a less peaceful resolution of these issues.

In the wake of this action, I call upon the international community, including the United States, to work diligently toward commencing negotiations with the aim of reaching a final status agreement.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

See the February 18 ELCA news release, [ELCA Presiding Bishop Responds to Veto of Resolution on Israeli Settlements](#).



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

