**Timeline of the Presbyterian divestment process, 2004-2012**

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The Presbyterian Church (USA) is preparing to vote on whether to divest from three companies -- Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions -- that profit from the Israeli occupation during its General Assembly in Pittsburgh next week. The Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA) has compiled a timeline of the divestment process within the church to this point. Divestment from companies benefiting from the occupation was first raised within the church in 2004:

2004 - The 216th General Assembly, meeting in Richmond, Virginia, votes to begin the process of engaging in selective divestment from US corporations that provide support, technology, and military equipment to the government of Israel to sustain the occupation of the Palestinian territories. Caterpillar is among the five corporations named.

2006 - The 217th GA meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, reaffirms corporate engagement on the basis of a report from the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) that talks with the named corporations are continuing. In light of this report, a specific overture seeking immediate divestment from Caterpillar doesn’t pass.

2008 – The 218th GA hears a report from MRTI that one corporation has been dropped from the potential divestment list (Citibank, that unknowingly through subsidiaries had been laundering terrorist money, and fixed the problem) and talks are continuing with the other corporations. It’s reported that discussions with Caterpillar are not as successful as had been hoped, but still continuing. Again, the GA chooses to approve the MRTI recommendation to continue corporate engagement even though another divestment overture comes before the plenary.

2009 - In November, with talks with Caterpillar failing, MRTI meets and votes to recommend to the 219th GA a statement denouncing Caterpillar’s business practices in the occupied Palestinian territories.

2010 – In July, the Middle East Study Committee (MESC), appointed by the 218th GA, issues a number of recommendations to the 219th GA, including one calling on the church to denounce Caterpillar’s business practices concerning Israel and the occupied territories. The GA approves MESC's recommendations, including the one on Caterpillar. The move is regarded as one last attempt to revive talks with the company. As a result, the GA votes to reject a divestment overture in lieu of this final attempt at corporate engagement.

2011 - MRTI meets in September and votes to recommend divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, stating that the committee had done everything in its power to bring change through dialogue with these companies to no avail. Although talks with Caterpillar throughout the years were in the public eye due to outside concern and overtures to previous General Assemblies, talks with the other two companies were also ongoing but remained mostly private. MRTI records indicate, however, similar patterns of behavior among all three corporations when it comes to attempts at constructive engagement.

2012 – In February, the highest governing council of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in non-Assembly years, the General Assembly Mission Council, approves sending MRTI's recommendation on divestment to the 220th GA convening in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on June 29th.

2012 – In April, MRTI officials meet with representatives of Caterpillar, the first such meeting Caterpillar has agreed to since 2009. The MRTI delegation reiterates their concerns, in particular over Israel’s use of Caterpillar products for the demolition of Palestinian civilian homes, the destruction of agricultural lands, the building of settlements, Israel-only roads, and the West Bank wall, in violation of international law. Afterward, MRTI chair Pastor Brian Ellison says that the meeting did nothing to change the committee’s recommendation to the 220th GA that the church divest from Caterpillar, observing that it “made clear that the church and the company have two different perspectives, and that no amount of dialogue is going to change the company’s business decision to continue selling products whose use the General Assembly has deemed a roadblock to peace in Israel/Palestine.”