

Update on work from the Conference

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Action Required	Decision
Resolution	84/1. The Council receives the report.

Alongside the workplan, the Council is asked to note the following updates on work from the 2017 Conference.

1. M20, M39 Welcoming Refugees

The Conference accepts the principle of the memorial and, in so doing:

- *requires a letter to be sent to the Home Office seeking a more compassionate response in the treatment of all displaced persons reaching the UK and, in particular, a further increase in the Government's commitment to the settlement of unaccompanied minors;*
- *calls on Circuits and Districts to lobby those local authorities which are not participating in the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme;*
- *directs the Methodist Council to encourage the Joint Public Issues Team to continue advocating for refugees and asylum seekers.*

The Connexional Team can report that a letter has been sent to the Home Office as required by the memorial. The Council is asked to encourage the Joint Public Issues Team to continue its work in this area, as set out in the third bullet point. The work continues but it is considered that the specific directions of these memorials have been carried out.

2. M27-M30 Engaging effectively with the Prevent Strategy

The Conference recognises the many calls on the resources of the Connexional Team. The Conference, therefore, responds positively to this memorial but declines the specific requests contained in it and instead asks the Methodist Council:

- (a) to request JPIT to work with ecumenical partners to bring the concerns identified by the Church to the attention of the relevant government departments;*
- (b) to request the DMLN, working with JPIT, to facilitate a round table consultation with participants from the Methodist Higher Education Chaplains' Group and other relevant parties, to explore the issues raised by this memorial, in the expectation that the participants themselves will be best placed to develop resources and provide support.*

The outcomes from this consultation should also inform the concerns shared with the Government.

This work is being taken forward by the Joint Public Issues Team and the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network, as set out in these memorials. This is therefore considered to be complete.

3. M21 Peace in Israel/Palestine

The Conference accepted the memorial, which "ask[ed] that the Conference reminds the Methodist people to be discerning in their seeking of truth in current statements of world leaders and the

media, to be judicious in their use of money and to pray for a way to real peace and security through justice for all the inhabitants of the Holy Land.”

The Connexional Team continues to maintain online resources relating to Israel/Palestine, and supports the World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel (which took place this year on 17-24 September). The memorial does not seem to require additional action, and it is therefore considered that, in the context of the ongoing work, this is completed.

4. M22, 23 and 37: Centenary of the Balfour Declaration

The Conference therefore accepts the spirit of this memorial and of memorial M23. The Conference directs letters to be sent to the Middle East Council of Churches, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Government of Israel, reaffirming the commitment of the Methodist Church to peace and justice for all the peoples of Israel/Palestine, expressing its regret at the damaging consequences of the Balfour Declaration for the Palestinian people, and calling for the centenary of the declaration to be marked as a significant historical event but not as a time of celebration...

This work is considered completed.

5. Notice of Motion 2017/201 (3): Europe and the UK

Without expressing a view on the merits or otherwise of the detailed political and economic relationships that might emerge from the current negotiations, the Conference therefore:

...

2. Extends its greetings to its partner Churches within other European countries and to the European Methodist Council.

3. Encourages Methodists and others to make representations to their MPs and MEPs asking the UK Government and EU to finalise as a matter of urgency, the future rights of EU27 citizens and UK citizens who similarly live in countries of the EU27...

The Joint Public Issues Team have drafted a letter to assist Methodists in writing to their MPs and MEPs. The work is considered completed.

6. Notice of Motion 2017/204: Movement Day UK 2017

... The Conference:

i) Expresses support to the organisers of Movement Day UK 2017

ii) Encourages Methodist people to register to attend

iii) Encourages all ministers to consider identifying those who might benefit from attending or might contribute beneficially to the conversation planned by what they would input by attending.

The Secretary of the Conference is a member of the reference group for Movement Day, and it will be promoted via the Week Ahead mailing. It is therefore considered that the actions required in this notice of motion have been completed.

7. Notice of Motion 2017/205: Major supermarkets and the ‘Fairtrade’ mark

The Conference therefore directs the Council to urge the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment and the Central Finance Board

- as part of its engagement with firms to promote genuine and transparent fair trade and Fairtrade Foundation where appropriate.*
- to encourage supermarkets to continue to support the Fairtrade Foundation’s Fairtrade mark.*

The Conference additionally directs the Methodist Council to raise this issue with Sainsbury's senior management.

The Conference therefore encourages individual Methodists, churches, circuits and districts:

- *to draw the attention of the public to this move which threatens the future of the Fairtrade accreditation and which will particularly impact upon the social premium currently paid to producer groups.*
- *to challenge large food and drink companies who are currently rethinking their supply chains, and looking to cut costs by devising their own environmental and labour policies.*

A letter has been sent and it has been shared with churches.

The Council is asked to refer this matter to the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment and the Central Finance Board.

It is considered that this work is completed.

8. Notice of Motion 2017/209: Day of prayer and fasting

The Conference recognises the challenges and changes facing every community in these islands and the urgent call of God on the Methodist people to share the love of God in Jesus Christ in word and action. The Conference therefore calls on every local church to launch the new Methodist year with a day of prayer and fasting and directs the Methodist Council to ensure that the Connexional Team promote such a day.

This has been done and is considered completed.

9. Notice of Motion 2017/211: Religious Freedom in Sri Lanka

... The Conference therefore:

- a) reaffirms its solidarity with sisters and brothers in the Methodist Church Sri Lanka;*
- b) calls on the British Government to make urgent representations to the President and Prime Minister of Sri Lanka:*
 - i) to urge restraint and uphold the freedoms of Sri Lankans of all faiths as guaranteed by the Constitution; and*
 - ii) to take firm actions to protect its citizens and bring the perpetrators of religiously-motivated violence to justice;*
- c) calls on the Methodist people to hold the Sri Lankan people in prayer and to act for justice, peace and freedom.*

The President of the Conference wrote to the Secretary of State on this matter, and the Secretary of the Conference has written to the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka to express solidarity and concern. It is therefore considered complete.

10. Resolution 15/6 (2016): Larger than Circuit

The Conference directs that training for leadership development of District Chairs be produced to cover the issues raised in paragraphs 28-41, and provided to existing and future District Chairs, and that this is overseen by the Secretary of the Conference.

Some pilot work has been undertaken in this area and further work will need to be planned in the course of the next year.

11. Resolution 20/3 (2017): 3Generate

The Conference encourages Local Churches and Circuits to enable all ages to engage positively with Mental Health Awareness Week.

This will be promoted via the Week Ahead mailing.

12. Resolution 22/2 (2017): Past Cases Review Implementation Group

The Conference directs that the guidance contained in paragraph 2.4.5 of this report on record keeping and pastoral ministry as amended from time to time in accordance with the statements made to the Conference should be placed on the Methodist Church website alongside the section on confidentiality contained in the 2008 Conference report With Integrity and Skill.

This has been done.

13. Resolution 27/8: Methodist Council (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)

The Conference urges Districts, Circuits, Local Churches and appropriate connexional bodies to engage with the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit.

This has been done.

*****RESOLUTION**

84/1. The Council receives the report.