



**Jewish Community  
Relations Council**  
**MILWAUKEE**  
JEWISH FEDERATION



## **Statement on the Presbyterian Church USA Divestment Decision**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation and the Wisconsin Council of Rabbis are dismayed by the national Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) decision to support divestment from certain companies doing business with Israel. While we understand and share deep concern for the suffering of Palestinians, this action is counterproductive to the quest for peace. It rejects partnership in favor of partisanship, ignoring the human experiences on both sides of this conflict.

We are saddened by the deep animus that an intransigent faction of church leaders has demonstrated against the Jewish people and the State of Israel. We are particularly pained by the choice to ignore the appeals of every major organizational voice in the American Jewish community, including more than 1,700 religious leaders from across the country and 19 from Wisconsin.

In our yearning for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, the American Jewish community supports a two state solution. The global boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement denies Israel's right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state. Divestment is a tool of division that rejects the necessary and difficult work of reconciliation and peacemaking.

While PC-USA leaders claim they have not endorsed the BDS movement, this decision – combined with their vote for the church to review its position on a two-state solution and the recent release and distribution by PCUSA of “Zionism Unsettled,” an anti-Jewish and anti-Israel congregational study guide – has the practical effect of supporting a campaign that aims for the destruction of Israel.

Milwaukee’s Jewish community recognizes that this decision by PCUSA’s national leadership does not reflect the views of our friends and neighbors. We appreciate the many members of the clergy and lay leadership of the Presbyterian Church who argued against divestment, who support a strong bond between Presbyterians and Jews and between the U.S. and Israel. We urge those who disagree with the position of PCUSA to speak out. We are confident they and we will continue working together to preserve our relationship and to promote peace in the Middle East.