

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D043
Title: Support and Advocacy for Iraqi Christians
Proposer: O'Neal, Ms. Yvonne
Topic: Interfaith Relations, Religious Freedom

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-D063 Support Christians and Other Persecuted Minorities in Iraq

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

D043 - Support and Advocacy for Iraqi Christians

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: O'Neal, Ms. Yvonne

Endorsed by: Candler, The Very Rev. Samuel G., Conley, Canon Judith

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: Yes

Directs Dioceses: Yes

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 04 - World Mission

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention reaffirms its commitment to advocating for the protection and rights of Iraqi Christians and other persecuted minorities in Iraq, as they seek to live in harmony and security per Resolution 2018-D063; and be it further

Resolved, That Episcopal Church dioceses, congregations, and organizations work collaboratively with national and international organizations, other denominations, and government bodies to enhance visibility and encourage response to the issues faced by these vulnerable communities in Iraq; and be it further

Resolved, That Episcopal Church dioceses, congregations, and organizations partner with organizations such as Stand with Iraqi Christians, that provide economic investment for the creation of sustainable livelihoods for persecuted minorities in Iraq; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church commend and support the ministry of St. George's Anglican Church in Bagdad, which provides vital services of health and education for all who seek its services, regardless of religious affiliation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Government Relations be instructed to monitor U.S. policy in Iraq, informing individuals and parishes on ways to engage with policies and legislation in support of sustaining Christians and other minority groups in Iraq toward a sustainable and secure future for all Iraqi citizens.

Explanation

Resolution 2018-D063 called for congregations and dioceses to work for the protection of persecuted minorities in Iraq in partnership with the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. Since then, the situation for Iraqi Christians and other minorities continues to be precarious, with ongoing challenges to their safety, rights, and freedoms.

The biblical city of Ur, located in Iraq, is considered the birthplace of Abraham, the father of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Iraq is home to some of the oldest continuous Christian communities on earth that still speak Aramaic, the language of Jesus. In his book, "Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years," Diarmaid MacCulloch noted: *Western Christians have forgotten that before the coming of Islam utterly transformed the situation in the eastern Mediterranean and Asia, there was a good chance that the centre of gravity of Christian faith might have moved east to Iraq rather than west to Rome.*

After centuries of conflict and decades of nearly continuous war, we in the Episcopal Church should commit to participating in the creation of a more prosperous, tolerant, and peaceful Iraq through advocacy, friendship, and financial assistance.



Resolution Number: 2018-D063
Title: Support Christians and Other Persecuted Minorities in Iraq
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the General Convention of The Episcopal Church express its support for the right of all Christians and other persecuted minorities in Iraq to live their life of faith and develop their communities free of persecution, discrimination and violence; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourages The Episcopal Church, working in partnership with the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, to provide prayers, friendship, and material support as determined by the needs and aspirations of Iraq's Christians, as an expression of our love and recognition of their religious, cultural, and humanitarian inclusion in the sacred Body of Christ; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Governmental Relations monitor the status of the United States concerning Iraq's Christians and other religious minorities, urge the State Department to advocate on their behalf, and report back to the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the General Convention inform the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf of this action.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 378-379.