

**Resolution:**  
**Divestment from Companies Selling Products Used as Weapons in Israel and Palestine**

**Whereas:** The prophets Isaiah and Micah declared that we must beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks, and Jesus consistently modeled and taught us peacemaking; and

**Whereas:** The Church of the Brethren has throughout its history opposed participation in war and in the production of weapons of war, from the writings of Alexander Mack, to the petition to the Colonial Assembly in Pennsylvania that “We find no freedom in giving, doing or assisting in anything by which men’s lives are destroyed or hurt,” to the 1991 Annual Conference statement that “encourages the boycott of products produced and sold by companies that derive large amounts of their income from military contracts”; and

**Whereas:** the Church of the Brethren helped initiate and is participating in the Decade to Overcome Violence sponsored by the World Council of Churches and declared its intention at the 2003 Annual Conference to be a “Living Peace Church”; and

**Whereas:** The Brethren Benefit Trust has a strong concern for responsible investment, including the avoidance of ownership of stock in companies that produce weapons of war; and

**Whereas:** The Brethren Benefit Trust holds stock in the Caterpillar Corporation, which sells to Israel bulldozers that are used to destroy Palestinian homes, farms, ancient olive groves, roads, and water and sewer pipes and that have killed several persons; and

**Whereas:** These Caterpillar D9 bulldozers are made according to military specifications and are sold to Israel under the U.S. Foreign Military Sales Program, a government-to-government program for selling U.S.-made defense equipment; and

**Whereas:** Human Rights Watch has documented the Israel Defense Force’s systematic use of the D9 bulldozer in illegal demolitions throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, including more than 2,500 Palestinian homes over the past four years in the Gaza Strip alone, and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food has warned that the delivery of bulldozers to the Israeli government with knowledge that they were being used for illegal demolitions might involve complicity in violations of human rights;

Therefore, based on the teachings of the prophets and of Jesus Christ we resolve that the Brethren Benefit Trust divest itself from ownership of Caterpillar Corporation and any other company that sells products that are used routinely as weapons of destruction or death in Israel and Palestine. Furthermore, we encourage all other Church of the Brethren agencies and individuals to review their own investments and take appropriate action. We

also ask for exploration as to whether such funds could be reinvested in companies doing business that enhances the quality of life for both Israelis and Palestinians.

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Adopted by the Fremont Fellowship in Christ congregation on September 28, 2005, and passed on to the Pacific Southwest District.

Ben Garst, Board Chair; Esther M. Ho, Church Clerk

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Adopted by District Conference of the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren meeting at the Modesto congregation, October 8, 2005, and passed on to Annual Conference.

R. Jan Thompson, Moderator; Doris Dunham, Clerk

**Action of the 2006 Annual Conference:** Annual Conference expresses appreciation for the resolution and thanks the Brethren Benefit Trust for its efforts to dialogue with Caterpillar Corporation. We urge Brethren agencies and individuals, and other people of faith, to review their own investments and refrain from investing in businesses that profit from war and violence, and to give faithful witness to Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace in financial matters as in all other matters.