

## **July 2020: Christian Leader letter to Republican and Democratic National Committees Urging Changes to Israel/Palestine section of Party Platforms**

CMEP Executive Director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon joined over 30 Christian clergy and lay leaders from across the country in two letters to the Republican and Democratic National Conventions regarding their party platforms on Israel/Palestine. The letter called for the parties to ensure their respective platforms include “both a commitment to Israel and its security and a commitment to Palestinian rights. It should include clear opposition to ongoing occupation, settlement expansion and any form of unilateral annexation of territory in the West Bank.”

With annexation of parts of the West Bank possible as early as July, the timing of this letter is particularly important. A full copy of the letter can be found [here](#) and the text of the letter sent to the Democratic National Committee is copied below. An identical letter was sent to the Republican National Committee.

*We the undersigned Christian leaders, as part of a broader interfaith effort, respectfully urge<sup>1</sup> Democratic Party leaders to ensure that the Israel/Palestine section of the Party's platform expresses support for the security and rights of both Israelis and Palestinians. United by values common to both Jewish and Christian faith traditions, we share the view of a majority of our communities that the United States should be an honest broker in the region. We ask the Democratic Party to make this a central element of its vision for the Middle East in its 2020 Platform.*

Date: June 2020 To: The Democratic National Committee<sup>2</sup>

From: Christian Faith Leaders Subject: Israel/Palestine in the Democratic Party Platform The actions of the Trump administration have upended decades of bipartisan US support for a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They have provided the Israeli government with a green light to permanently reject Palestinian statehood, legitimize settlement expansion, entrench the occupation, and pave the way for annexation in the West Bank.

Past party platforms have rightly stated a commitment to Israel's security and included condemnations of threats and actions against our ally, in addition to embracing a two-state outcome. Those platforms have, however, also been silent on the rights of Palestinians, on Israeli actions that undermine those rights and the prospects for a two-state solution, and on the need for security for both peoples.

The 2020 platform should end this double standard by expressly stating both a commitment to Israel and its security and a commitment to Palestinian rights. It should include clear opposition

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<sup>1</sup> <https://jstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/DNC-Campaign-Vehicle.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> A companion to this letter is also being conveyed to the Republican National Committee.

to ongoing occupation, settlement expansion and any form of unilateral annexation of territory in the West Bank.

We ask that the platform address these issues—each of which has been exacerbated under the current administration—to make clear what a comprehensive Israel/Palestine foreign policy looks like under a future administration, which includes a commitment to security, democracy, and human rights.