

1 **A CALL FOR A REFLECTION AND ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF THE**
2 **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**
3 **A Resolution of Witness**
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5 **Submitted by Wider Church Ministries**
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7 **SUMMARY**

8 This resolution seeks to raise awareness of and engage settings of the church in advocacy
9 regarding the violent conflicts and human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the
10 Congo, related especially to the exploitative mining of resources for export and industrial
11 application.

12 **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**

13 In Matthew 23:23-24 Jesus asserts an obligation in public affairs to ensure justice for the
14 common good: “Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill,
15 and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and
16 faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others.” In Matthew
17 25:40 he teaches moral responsibility in the reign of God is strongest for those most in
18 need, saying “just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my
19 family, you did it to me.” Similarly our international commerce and public affairs should
20 be governed by an obligation to ensure the common good, and to resist policies and
21 practices that do injustice and violence to others.

22 **RESOLUTION**

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24 WHEREAS throughout the past two centuries, for the United Church of Christ, global
25 presence and witness have been the core of God's mission through the church; and
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27 WHEREAS the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo (CDCC), in what today is the
28 Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), formerly known as Zaire, was founded in 1889 in
29 relation to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada, and is an
30 ecumenical partner today of the United Church of Christ through our Common Global
31 Ministries; and
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33 WHEREAS the 62 protestant denominations united under the ecumenical umbrella of the
34 Church of Christ in the Congo have consistently decried the brutal and unmitigated
35 exploitation of the Congo's immense resources; and
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37 WHEREAS, since the advent of Congolese independence on June 30, 1960, the continued
38 greed of global corporations for precious and strategic raw materials from the Congo and
39 failure of the international community to respond to the documented human rights abuses
40 of Congolese victims has led to the failure of the Congo state; and
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42 WHEREAS the series of invasions of the Congo by proxy states Rwanda and Uganda that
43 commenced in 1996 have facilitated unfettered access to Congolese natural resources by
44 international corporations and their collaborators in the Congo; have not only undermined

45 democratic advancements, but have also cost the lives of an estimated 6,000,000
46 Congolese; have subjected up to a half million Congolese women and girls to rape,
47 including sexual mutilation by multiple armies from Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, and
48 Burundi; and have increased dramatically the incidence for HIV/AIDS among women and
49 girls, thus creating a health time bomb with dire consequences for the Congo; and

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51 WHEREAS an estimated 1,250 Congolese reportedly perish daily in Eastern Congo as a
52 direct or indirect result of the militarization of mines by elite networks of militia supported
53 by business interests in the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, and the industrialized world, at the
54 detriment of Congolese socio-economic development and liberation (Global Witness
55 report, 2003/2004); and

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57 WHEREAS these criminal behaviors are orchestrated and maintained by those seeking to
58 profit from unfettered access to Congolese strategic natural resources (notably coltan,
59 cobalt, tungsten, cassiterite, in addition to diamonds, gold, copper, uranium, oil, timber),
60 in order to benefit mostly private wealth in industrialized nations, yet subjugating the
61 Congolese people, despite the wealth of their natural resources, to poverty, suffering,
62 slave labor, and human trafficking; and

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64 WHEREAS the international community, including the United Nations, has not adequately
65 responded to these documented crimes against humanity, thus demonstrating a double
66 standard in the application of international justice because of financial greed and disregard
67 for the value of Congolese people,

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69 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-eighth General Synod of the United
70 Church of Christ encourages its members, congregations, and various settings to pray,
71 reflect and advocate on behalf of sisters and brothers in the Democratic Republic of the
72 Congo.

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74 BE IT RESOLVED that congregations will be encouraged to recognize "Congo Week," the
75 third week in October, in their respective annual worship calendars as a week of
76 commemoration for the millions of victims of the scramble for Congo's resources and a
77 stand for justice in solidarity with the people of the Congo; and

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79 FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that congregations working with Global Ministries of the
80 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ carry out advocacy
81 and education across the globe for the Congo, with governments, the United Nations, and
82 other governmental and non-governmental organizations, and with multinational
83 corporations, until Congolese security and sovereignty is obtained. Funding for the
84 implementation of the resolution will be made available in accordance with the overall
85 mandates of the Covenanted Ministries called upon and the funds available.

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88 **FUNDING**

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90 Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the
91 overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

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93 **IMPLEMENTATION**

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95 Justice and Witness Ministries is requested to work with Wider Church Ministries to
96 implement this resolution.