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Sent: 16 October 2006 14:12
Subject: PRESS RELEASE : Anglican Parish Disinvests from the Central Board of Finance over Caterpillar Shares

Press Release
16th October 2006

The Interfaith Group for Morally Responsible Investment

Anglican Parish Disinvests from the Central Board of Finance over Caterpillar Shares

An Anglican parish has taken the radical decision to withdraw £140,000 from the Church of England's Central Board of Finance investment account. The unanimous decision by Virginia Water PCC, in the Diocese of Guildford, was taken because the CBF has refused to implement a decision by the General Synod of the Church of England in February to heed the call from the sister church of Jerusalem and the Middle East and disinvest from companies such as Caterpillar which are profiting from Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine. Caterpillar D9 bulldozers are the principle weapon being used by the Israeli military to destroy civilian homes, farms and businesses in Palestine.

The vicar, the Revd Dr Stephen Sizer, insisted, "This is not an attack on Israel or the Jewish people but a non-violent response to an unjust and intolerable situation. Western companies are profiting from the colonisation of Palestine and construction of the illegal Separation Wall. We are simply doing what the local Church in Palestine and the General Synod has asked us to do. If the CBF will not withdraw our money from Caterpillar, then we will do it for them. We are now looking for an investment fund with a more ethically sound policy. We cannot turn our backs on our sisters and brothers in Palestine any longer. We cannot close our ears to their pleas for help. How can we profit from policies which we believe to be both threatening the viability of a Palestinian state and also damaging prospects for peace and security for the Israeli people?"

The Revd. Dr Stephen Sizer is available for telephone interviews on 00 44 7970 789549

The Interfaith Group for Morally Responsible Investment (IMRI)

A campaign group working for peace with justice and composed of :

Amos Trust, Interpal, Friends of Al Aqsa, Jews for Justice for Palestinians, Just Peace UK, Pax Christi, Palestinian Return Centre, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, War on Want, and individuals from different church denominations.

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