

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 226th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Direct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to begin focused engagement with General Electric (GE) and Palantir Technologies, Inc. in the 2025 and 2026 proxy seasons and to report back to the 227th General Assembly (2026) with possible divestment recommendations for the companies that are not moving toward compliance with established General Assembly policies.

Rationale

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has long recognized that church investment is “an instrument of mission.”¹ General Electric and Palantir Technologies are both involved in activities that bring them into direct conflict with our policy of mission-directed investment.

Military-Related Production, Human Rights, and Divestment

The PC(USA) has identified concerns that can qualify a company for divestment and/or proscription. The most relevant criteria for these two companies are military-related production and human rights violations.²

Regarding military-related production, the divestment/proscription list offers guidelines that include “the sale of weapons to states involved in armed conflicts where there are heightened risks of those weapons being used in ways that constitute serious and systematic violations of international humanitarian law (IHL).”³

Regarding human rights violations, the list notes,

It is in conflict-affected and high-risk areas (CAHRA) ... that people are most vulnerable to violations of their human rights. CAHRA may include ... military occupations (e.g., Occupied Palestinian Territories)....⁴

General Electric (GE)⁵

GE is a vast corporation involved in a wide variety of activities. Its revenues in 2022 totaled \$76.6 billion, with a “defense revenue” of \$4.4 billion.⁶

Military Production and Human Rights Violations in Israel/Palestine

GE's F110-GE-129 engines are found in all F-15 and F-16 fighter jets. Its electronic components are included in F-35 fighter jets.⁷ F-15, F-16, and F-35 fighter jets have been used regularly in strikes on Gaza, including in 2008-09, 2014, 2021, and 2023-24. For each of those bombing assaults Israel has been accused of war crimes by the human rights organizations Amnesty International (AI), B'tselem, and Human Rights Watch (HRW).⁸

GE's T700 engines are employed in Israeli helicopters, including the Apaches that have been prominent in military operations against the West Bank and Gaza.⁹

The LM2500 produced by GE is the turbine part in the Sa'ar 5 warship with which the Israeli Navy enforces the naval blockade of Gaza.¹⁰ In 2010 a Sa'ar ship assaulted the Gaza Freedom flotilla, leading to war crimes charges by the ICC's chief prosecutor.¹¹

Human Rights Violations in Yemen and China

GE works with the Royal Saudi Air Force, which has been implicated in war crimes in Yemen. The company provides Saudi with engines used in F-15 jets and Black Hawk and Apache helicopters. According to the human rights organization, PAX, the company “should be seen as ‘contributing’ to the [human rights] violations in Yemen.”¹²

GE is connected through its supply chain to the forced migration and labor of the Uyghur population in China. GE is a customer of Dongguan Yidong Electronic Co. Ltd., a supplier with factories in China that participate in the forced transfer, re-education, and exploitation of the Uyghurs.¹³

Palantir Technologies, Inc.

Palantir Technologies develops technology used in machine-assisted and human-driven data analysis. Palantir was created with start-up money provided by the CIA’s venture capital branch.¹⁴

Military Production and Human Rights Violations in Israel/Palestine

Palantir’s leading international clients include Israel’s security forces, which use Palantir’s predictive systems to identify individuals considered a “threat.” Using this technology, Israel jails Palestinians because they fit the ‘terrorist profile. One officer commented in 2016, “Unlike terrorists who belong to Hamas or the Islamic Jihad, if you get to their house a week before the attack the kid doesn’t know that he is a terrorist yet.”¹⁵ By its police profiling, Palantir Technologies contributes to the mass incarceration of Palestinians.”¹⁶

Contribution to Human Rights Violations against Migrants and Asylum Seekers

Palantir’s products contribute to human rights violations in the U.S. and on the U.S.-Mexico border in immigrant surveillance and targeting. In 2020 AI concluded, “there is a high risk that Palantir is contributing to serious human rights violations of migrants and asylum-seekers.”¹⁷ ICE has used its products to carry out workplace raids, deportations, and separate migrant families.¹⁸ Palantir developed a tool used by ICE to separate immigrant families and build cases against migrants slated for deportation. Palantir’s “FALCON” product has been used to help conduct workplace raids against undocumented migrants.¹⁹

Contributions to U.S. Police Forces and Military

Palantir provides predictive policing technology to law enforcement agencies in the United States, a practice widely recognized as racist.²⁰ The company has garnered more than \$600 million in Pentagon contracts since 2008. Since 2018, Palantir has worked on “Project Maven,” an “initiative to deploy autonomous AI drones that can track vehicles and people, with the goal of sending those drones to combat zones to help the military prioritize targets and plan raids.”²¹

Conclusions

Both General Electric and Palantir Technologies are involved in activities that conflict with the mission-directed investment policy of the PC(USA). We urge the General Assembly to direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to instruct MRTI to begin a focused engagement process with General Electric (GE) and Palantir Technologies, Inc. with the aim of moving these companies away from actions that create human harm, are a barrier to peace, and violate human rights.

Notes

- ¹ [Office of Faith-Based Investing and Corporate Engagement](#), PC(USA).
- ² [PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH \(USA\) 2023 General Assembly Divestment/ Proscription List 2023](#), p.1.
- ³ [Ibid.](#), pp. 5-6.
- ⁴ [Ibid.](#), p. 7.
- ⁵ The following section and the section on Palantir Technologies utilize reports on the AFSC's [Investigate website](#).
- ⁶ ["Top 100 Defense Companies"](#), *Defense News*, 2023.
- ⁷ ["GE's F110 Engine"](#), GE Aerospace; Christine Gibson, ["The F-35 Stealth Fighter..."](#) Aug. 24, 2023; ["Boeing"](#), Investigate website, AFSC; ["Lockheed Martin Corp."](#), Investigate website, AFSC.
- ⁸ ["ISRAEL/OPT: The Conflict in Gaza"](#), AI, Jan. 19, 2009; ["Israel/Gaza"](#), HRW, Dec. 30, 2008; ["Israel/Palestine"](#) HRW, Jul. 15, 2014; ["Gaza 'Black Friday'...."](#) AI, Jul. 29, 2015; ["Israel/ OPT..."](#) AI, May 17, 2021; ["Killing blockaded civilians"](#) B'tselem, May 15, 2021; ["HRW accuses Israel, Palestinians"](#) Al Jazeera, Jul. 27, 2021; ["Commission of Inquiry collecting evidence"](#) UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 10 October 2023; ["Israel: Palestinian armed groups"](#) AI, Oct. 12, 2023; ["Damning evidence crimes"](#) AI, Oct. 20, 2023; Jacob Magid and Jeremy Sharon, ["B'tselem accuses Israel"](#) *Times of Israel*, 10 Oct., 2023; Ben Adler, ["3 questions"](#) *Yahoo! News*, Oct. 11, 2023; Stefano D'Urso, ["Configuration And Payload"](#) *The Aviationist*, Oct.12, 2023; ; Gabriel Centeno, ["Meet the Israeli fighter jets"](#) *Aeroflap*, Oct. 10, 2023; Christine Gibson, ["The F-35 Stealth Fighter...."](#) Aug. 4, 2023.
- ⁹ ["The T-700...."](#) GE Aerospace; ["GE XT700-GE-700"](#) National Air and Space Museum; ["Boeing Co."](#), Investigate website, AFSC; ["Lockheed Martin Corp."](#), Investigate website, AFSC; Christine Gibson, ["Trusted Around the World"](#) GE, Jun. 22,2023, Lubna Masarwa and Oscar Rickett, ["Israel uses Apache"](#) *Middle East Eye*, June 19, 2023; ["2021 is deadliest year"](#) DCI, Dec. 10, 2021; Karen Yourish and Josh Keller, ["The Toll in Gaza and Israel"](#) *NYT*, Jul. 15, 2014; Anne Barnard, ["Boys Drawn to Gaza Beach"](#) *NYT*, July 16, 2014; ["HUMAN RIGHTS IN PALESTINE"](#) Human Rights Council, UN, Sept. 25, 2009.; ["US-made Apaches"](#) *Al Jazeera*, Sept. 1, 2009,.
- ¹⁰ ["LM2500"](#) GE.
- ¹¹ ["Israel, Blockade of Gaza"](#) ICRC; ["Statement of ICC Prosecutor"](#) ICC, Nov. 30, 2017. .
- ¹² ["High-risk arms trade ..."](#) Pax for Peace, Jul., 2022.
- ¹³ Vicky Xiuzhong Xu, ["Uyghurs for sale"](#) Australian Strategic Policy Institute Policy Brief, Report No. 26/2020.
- ¹⁴ ["Palantir Technologies, Inc."](#) Stock Analysis; Sam Biddle, ["How Peter Thiel's Palantir...."](#) *Intercept*, Feb. 22, 2017,
- ¹⁵ Orr Hirschauge and Hagar Shezaf, ["How Israel Jails Palestinians"](#) *Haaretz*, May 31, 2017,.
- ¹⁶ ["Thousands of Palestinians"](#) *Al Jazeera*, Jun. 30, 2021.
- ¹⁷ ["Failing to Do Right"](#) AI 2020.
- ¹⁸ ["The War Against Immigrants"](#) *Mijente*, August 2019.
- ¹⁹ ["New Documentary Reveals"](#) *The Appeal*, My, 21, 2020; ["Data Company"](#) *WNYC*, July 16, 2019,.
- ²⁰ Caroline Haskins, ["300 Californian Cities"](#) *Vice*, July 12, 2019, Maha Ahmed, ["Aided By Palantir...."](#) *Intercept*, May 11, 2018; ["Palantir Technologies Inc."](#), Investigate website, AFSC.
- ²¹ ["Palantir Technologies Inc."](#), Investigate website, AFSC.