Clergy Discipline Measure 2003

In the Clergy Discipline Tribunal – Diocese of Winchester

Re the Reverend Dr Stephen Robert Sizer

WITNESS STATEMENT OF
GARTH HEWITT

I, **GARTH HEWITT**, of 1 De Walden Mews, Eastbourne, BN20 7QU, **WILL SAY** as follows:

1. I make this statement on behalf of the Reverend Dr Stephen Sizer ("**Stephen**") in support of his Answer to a Complaint made against him by the Board of Deputies of British Jews ("**the Board of Deputies**").

Biography

2. I am primarily a singer-songwriter, performing songs of peace across the world with my guitar. I released my first album in 1973, "*The Lion and the Lamb*", and my latest in 2019, "*My Name is Palestine*".

3. My commitment to social justice pervades my music and led me to establish the human rights charity, Amos Trust, in 1985, for which I worked as its Director for 26 years. I continue to raise awareness of social justice issues by recording and releasing albums, and also through writing books and articles. I have written 10 books, including a book on the theology of Justice, "*Occupied Territories – the revolution of love from Bethlehem to the ends of the earth*", which was published in 2014. This theology of action shows the way to a revolution of love and justice, a revolution that is relevant all around the world – a revolution of non-violence, of valuing all people as equal; it's a call to do justice and to show the value of hope and humanity in whatever situation we find ourselves.

4. For 25 years I was also one of the Directors of the Greenbelt Christian Arts Festival in England. I was one of those who influenced Greenbelt to become a festival with a commitment to social justice.

5. I am also an Anglican priest and honorary Canon at St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem. For 15 years I was the Guild Vicar of All Hallows on the Wall in the City of London – a centre for organisations involved in issues of justice and art. I am now Associate Priest at St Clement's, Eastcheap, a home of Amos Trust.

6. In 2006 I was given special creditation by the House of Poets in Ramallah, West Bank, for my "*positive attitude towards the Palestinian people and their struggle towards freedom and justice*". I am a Patron of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and in 2007 was given an award by the British relief and development agency Interpal for my "*longstanding commitment to the Palestinian people through both the relief and awareness work done by his charity, the Amos Trust, and also for his personal commitment through songs and telling the stories of ordinary Palestinians and their daily struggles*".

7. I was a regular contributor to BBC Radio 2's Pause for Thought until I became semi-retired.

Knowledge and experience of Stephen Sizer

8. I have known Stephen for 46 years, since he was at University. I took him on one of his early visits to the Holy Land when we were both on the staff of St Saviour's Church in Guildford. Since then he has become recognised as an expert on Christian pilgrimage in the Holy Land and also on Christian Zionism.

9. Stephen's motivation is working for peace. It is a strange fact that those who are truly dedicated to a peace for both Israelis and Palestinians alike can get criticised by those who only want one viewpoint to be represented. I am glad to say, based on my many years of experience of him, that Stephen is committed to international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and human rights. He is committed to a way forward that would bring equality and dignity to both communities.

10. In my experience, Stephen is a gentle but firm peacemaker, who lives out the Biblical mandate that all are made in the image of God. I have not, ever, during all the years of our friendship and work together, witnessed anything in his words or actions that reflects anti-Semitism. He has worked with Jewish peace activists and Rabbis and has won their respect and also the respect of the Muslim community. He has been a significant witness to the Christian value of peace-making.

11. In summary, based on my experience I can state with confidence that Stephen has given his life to the ministry of the church and particularly following in the footsteps of Jesus in terms of sharing the gospel and working for equality, peace and justice.

The Amos Trust

12. I am the Founder of the Amos Trust, a small, creative human rights organisation committed to challenging injustice, building hope and creating positive change. It partners with vibrant grass-roots projects around the world that have unique local experience, expertise and connections. Collaboration is at the heart of everything it does.

13. Stephen was a Trustee of the Amos Trust from 1990 to 2000 and has actively supported its ministry.

Peacemaker Trust

14. The Peacemaker Trust was founded by Stephen in 2017 and he is its Director. The Trust seeks to be a catalyst for peace-making, especially where minorities are persecuted, where justice is denied, human rights are suppressed or reconciliation is needed. It is a faith ministry, entirely dependent on the prayers, advocacy and financial support of its supporters. It affirms the 5 Marks of Mission and the Nicene Creed as its doctrinal statement. Its Patrons are the Most Revd Dr Mouneer Anis (until recently Primate of Jerusalem and the Middle East) and the Most Revd Henry Orombi (formerly Primate of Uganda); and its International Board of Reference includes Anglican Bishops Azad Marshall (Co-Adjudicator Bishop of Raiwind, Pakistan), Seth Ndayirukiye (Bishop of Matana Diocese, Burundi), Abraham Nhial (Bishop of Aweil

Diocese, South Sudan) John Gladwin (retired bishop of Chelmsford), Michael Langrish (retired bishop of Exeter), Riah Abu El Assal (retired bishop of Jerusalem) and Bill Musk (retired assistant bishop of the Diocese of Egypt and North Africa).

15. Current Peacemaker Trust projects include feeding the poorest in Cyangugu, Rwanda, welcoming asylum seekers and refugees in the Southampton and Winchester area, teaching Christian leaders in Uganda and Tanzania to run Christianity Explored and olive tree planting in Palestine.

16. I was a Trustee of the Peacemaker Trust for its inception, working alongside and supporting Stephen in his ministry .

Stephen and anti-Semitism

17. If Stephen was anti-Semitic that would not be acceptable. However, having worked with Stephen in different ways for 44 years, I have never observed this to be the case.

18. I have heard Stephen speak on numerous occasions and read his written works and I have no doubt that Stephen is driven by a commitment to justice, peace, non-violence and above all reconciliation. He is motivated by the cry of Palestinian Christians for justice and solidarity, in the sure belief that this will also provide the best hope for security and peace for Israelis. The allegations against him are not only unfounded but are a deliberate attempt to try to prevent church leaders from speaking out in a prophetic manner on the situation facing Palestinians

Statement of truth

I believe the facts and matters in this statement to be true.



GARTH HEWIT

Date: 19th October 2020