Clergy Discipline Measure 2003

In the Clergy Discipline Tribunal – Diocese of Winchester

Re the Reverend Dr Stephen Robert Sizer

WITNESS STATEMENT OF
JEREMY MOODEY

I, **JEREMY MOODEY**, of 14 Chartridge Lane, Chesham, Bucks HP5 2JJ, **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. My career to date includes having served as a British diplomat in Pakistan and Rome before working as an investment banker in the City of London for over fifteen years. I became the CEO of "BibleLands", a 160-year-old charity, in 2009 and one of my most significant actions was, in 2012, to oversee the relaunching of this charity as "Embrace the Middle East" and today this is a Christian charity aimed at helping people of all faiths and no faith to free themselves from lives of poverty and injustice. The charity has a particular focus on the lives and communities of people in the Middle East and seeks to improve lives through healthcare, education and community development projects.

3. I moved to become the CEO of the Anglican clergy support charity Clergy Support Trust in 2017 but am stepping down in November 2020 so that I can concentrate on my own training for ordained Anglican ministry, with ordination expected in June 2021.

4. During my time at Embrace the Middle East I was for a while on the management committee of what is now 'Sabeel-Kairos', which is the operating name of the UK charitable company, Friends of Sabeel UK (FOSUK) Ltd which is a Christian charity focused on supporting peace and justice in the Middle East and, in particular, Israel/Palestine. It works closely with two Palestinian Christian organisations, the Sabeel

Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre, based in Jerusalem, and Kairos Palestine, a human rights organisation based in Bethlehem.

5. One of the supporters and close partners of Sabeel-Kairos is The Amos Trust, another UK-based charity which is also focused on challenging injustice, supporting human rights and giving a voice to those at grassroots level.

Anti-Zionism vs Antisemitism

6. I have a particular interest in the relationship between antisemitism and anti-Zionism and in May 2016 had a letter published in the Church of England Newspaper from which I hope it might be useful for the purposes of this statement to quote as follows:-

"Zionism means different things to different people, but at its simplest is support for a Jewish state in historic Palestine, a land that already had an indigenous Arab population. Many Jews themselves do not support such a notion, which is a fairly recent invention, a response to European antisemitism in the late 19th century. Prior to this time diaspora and assimilation were dominant themes in Judaism. It follows that Christians can also be opposed to Zionism without being antisemitic. They can also oppose the actions of Israel in its almost half century of military occupation in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, and its ten-year blockade of Gaza, without being antisemitic."

"At the heart of this debate is a confusion about what antisemitism actually means. It has never been defined as a term (there is no official EU definition as some claim) and it remains highly subjective. In 2003 an Oxford academic suggested a simple definition (which incidentally ignores on the basis of common usage that Arabs are also Semites): "hostility towards Jews as Jews". This seems reasonable, but sadly the term has now been politicised (and as a consequence devalued) by the inclusion within it of legitimate criticism of Israel. The term needs to be reclaimed, or else genuine antisemitism will be lost in the fog".

7. One of the criticisms levelled against Stephen when he has been publicly critical of the actions of the State of Israel or of Zionism, is that to focus so much on Israel and not on

the actions of other countries where there are questions about human rights is itself antisemitic. This is what Natan Sharansky has described as the 'double standards' criterion in his self-styled and controversial '3D test of antisemitism' (the other Ds are 'delegitimisation' and 'demonisation' of the State of Israel). The 'double standards' argument has also been used regularly by the Board of Deputies of British Jews. But I believe that in an open democratic society it is a basic premise of free speech that we can choose those topics about which we feel and express views passionately, without having our motives traduced. On the specific issue of 'double standards', in August 2014 I wrote the following in a column for the Church of England Newspaper, responding to a previous article by its columnist Andrew Carey which condemned those who were critical of Israel and Zionism:

"Carey focused particularly on the double standards test, arguing that those with an 'unjustified obsession' in Israel and Palestine were guilty of ignoring much more serious examples of human rights abuses, such as are found in Burma, North Korea and Saudi Arabia."

"I have always found this argument, which is often raised by Israel's defenders, to be specious. It was powerfully demolished by the musician Brian Eno in an open letter published earlier this month. He argued that there is not much we can do in the West about regimes such as Burma, North Korea and Saudi Arabia. They are what they are. But, as Eno noted, Israel 'claims to be like us, part of the Western First World, part of the same set of moral assumptions'. And our Western governments not only created the Israel/Palestine problem in the first place (our colonial carve-ups after the First World War and the imperialistic hubris of the 1917 Balfour Declaration come to mind) but continue to perpetuate the injustice by offering almost unqualified support for what Israel does today. So those of us in the west concerned about securing justice for the Palestinians are entitled to say: 'not in our name'. And despite what Andrew Carey may aver, it is not antisemitic to do so."

How I know Stephen

8. I have known Stephen for over ten years. I first came to know him during my time at Embrace the Middle East and I preached at his then church, Christ Church Virginia Water. We have remained in touch since his retirement from stipendiary Anglican ministry.

9. I do not consider Stephen to be an antisemite and neither to my knowledge am I aware of his having written or said anything that is antisemitic. I have always been absolutely convinced of his commitment to oppose racism and antisemitism, as evidenced by the statements in his 2007 book, 'Zion's Christian Soldiers' (p15), that 'racism is a sin and without excuse' and that 'antisemitism must be repudiated unequivocally'.

Statement of truth

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



JEREMY MOODEY

Date: 16 October 2020