

RESOLUTION 24R-17

To request the RI Board and the TRF Trustees to consider amending the Codes of Policies to state that officers will refrain from making public statements in support of or against conflicts around the world when acting in their official capacity

Proposer(s): District 2452, Armenia, Bahrain, Cyprus, Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan, and United Arab Emirates
District 6110, USA
District 6200, USA
District 6820, USA
District 6840, USA

1 WHEREAS, RI is characterized in its bylaws as non-political, and

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3 WHEREAS, the Rotary Code of Policies

4 1. does not permit the Rotary world to support any particular political belief,
5 issue, or viewpoint;

6 2. directs RI and its member clubs to “refrain from issuing partisan political
7 statements”; and

8 3. prohibits any “corporate action or corporate expression of opinion” to be
9 “taken or given by Rotary on political subjects” because of Rotary’s

10 worldwide membership, which includes persons of many facets of political
11 opinion, and

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13 WHEREAS, the bylaws and policies of RI make no distinction between public and
14 private statements by Rotary leadership, and

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16 WHEREAS, because of its non-political nature, the bylaws and policies of RI do
17 not offer any guidelines as to which international conflicts may be commented
18 upon and which to avoid, and

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20 WHEREAS, The Rotary Foundation Code of Policies does not materially refer to
21 these matters at all, and

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23 WHEREAS, by supporting one side or another through our public statements, we
24 place Rotary clubs and their members at risk of retaliation, and

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26 WHEREAS, by commenting on a conflict, we may create further divisions among
27 our own members who deem other conflicts more worthy of Rotary attention,
28 and

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30 WHEREAS, the leadership of RI is tasked with representing all clubs

1 IT IS RESOLVED by Rotary International that the Board of Directors of Rotary
2 International and the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation consider amending the
3 Rotary Code of Policies and The Rotary Foundation Code of Policies to state that
4 RI directors and corporate officers and The Rotary Foundation Trustees and
5 corporate officers will refrain from making statements, written or oral, accessible
6 to the public, in support of or against participants in conflicts around the world
7 when acting in their official capacity representing RI or The Rotary Foundation.

(End of Text)

PURPOSE AND EFFECT

8 The purpose of this resolution is to safeguard the neutrality of Rotary in
9 providing for the representation of all Rotary members and clubs. We also wish
10 to safeguard Rotary members and clubs from reprisals from any quarter in
11 conflicts around the world due to statements by its leadership and to ensure that
12 Rotary is not put into a situation in which our leadership must defend itself from
13 choosing to comment upon one international conflict rather than another.

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15 This resolution does not limit personal statements of conviction that all
16 individual Rotarians may exercise according to their own values and beliefs.
17 Rather, it affects only the public statements of Rotarians, written or oral, made
18 while they are representing Rotary in their official capacity.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

19 If implemented, this resolution would have no substantial financial impact on RI
20 or The Rotary Foundation.