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[Home](#) [GA Moderators' Blog](#) [Find a church](#) [News](#) [What we do](#) [Reform](#) [Forums](#) [About](#) [URC Publications](#)


Browse

News July 2010

General Assembly opens with double induction
 Outgoing moderator reflects on two "exhilarating" years
 Young people tell of learning for life
 Assembly celebrates PILOTs day out
 Community Project Award winners announced
 Loretta Minghella inspires Assembly with passion and commitment
 URC adopts Vision 2020 as framework for future
 Nestle boycott remains – for now
 Award winners at the heart of community action
 Assembly celebrates its 'Jubilee Ministers'
 Assembly elects moderators for 2012/14
 Interfaith guests of General Assembly
 Westminster College gets green light for development appeal
 Children's Assembly says "Thank you for including us"
 Gerard Kelly speaks to Assembly
 United Reformed Church hits the airwaves
 Moderator gets on his bike
 Calling all singers to Saltaire!
 Reform launches new website
 Praise for 'hopeful and honest' Assembly
 Council for World Mission appoints new general secretary

[Home](#) > [Old news](#) > [2010](#) > [July](#) > Nestle boycott remains – for now


Nestle boycott remains – for now

03 Jul 2010

General Assembly has voted to defer a proposed ending of its 18-year boycott of Nestlé.

After animated discussion, a resolution was passed which effectively continues the boycott of Nestlé products at this time, but anticipates ending the boycott should the company gain acceptance by the FTSE4Good Index - through reaching FTSE4Good-prescribed standards of corporate responsibility.

The resolution says: "General Assembly resolves that if Nestlé obtains listing on the FTSE4Good Index, Mission Council be instructed to rescind the boycott on Nestlé products outlined in the Assembly 1992 resolution."

The URC's boycott on Nestlé products began in 1992 in protest at the company's policy of marketing and distributing breast milk substitutes to mothers in poorer countries.

Melanie Frew, convenor of the URC working group that reviewed the boycott, expressed the hope that Assembly's conditional lifting of the ban would create leverage for the URC to press Nestle over improving its ethical conduct.

Prior to adopting the resolution on Nestlé, Assembly passed a resolution to standardise its investment dealings with companies according to ethical criteria. The resolution reads:

"General Assembly agrees that, for investment purposes, all companies should be treated in accordance with our ethical investment policy."

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