



MA'AN DEVELOPMENT CENTER



# **D**IVESTMENT **&** **S**ANCTIONS

lessons learned in effective solidarity





# **B**OYCOTT, **D**IVESTMENT, & **S**ANCTIONS

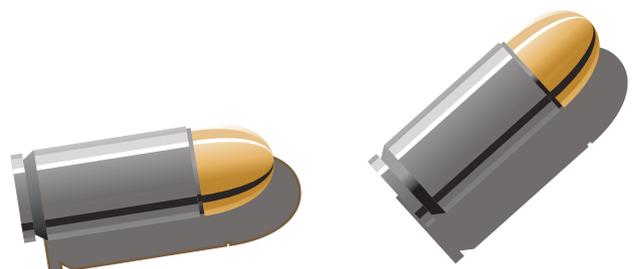
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# WHY BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT SANCTIONS?

*“For years the occupation of Palestine and apartheid in South Africa vied for attention from the international community. In 1994, apartheid came to an end and Palestine became the only developing country in the world under the subjugation of a Western-affiliated regime. Herein lies its significance to the future of human rights. There are other regimes, particularly in the developing world, that suppress human rights, but there is no other case of a Western-affiliated regime that denies self-determination and human rights to a developing people, and that has done so for so long.”*

United Nations Special Rapporteur for the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Mr. John Dugard (A/HRC/4/17)

The similarities between apartheid South Africa and Israel are, sadly, well-known. However, one analogy may prove particularly useful: South Africa’s resistance history offers useful lessons around local and international civil protest and more notably regarding the potential impact a coordinated campaign of boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) could have.

Just as occurred in South Africa, existing solidarity for Palestine needs to be galvanized to transform current feeling

into a powerful global movement that can isolate Israel. Just as the 1960 massacre of protesters at Sharpeville spurred on the campaign to end Apartheid, global, regional and local civil society outrage over Israel’s actions is at a peak following the massacre of over 1,400 Gazans during Israeli Operation Cast Lead. Now is the opportune time.

This report traces the history of BDS for Palestine and outlines current efforts and challenges that must be overcome. By increasing awareness of the movement and drawing upon the successful South African experience, the report aims to inform civil society movements of how to better harness the mass outrage felt by so many over Israel’s violations of the rights of the Palestinian people. As the report demonstrates, these efforts must occur at all levels; locally, regionally and internationally. Moreover, boycott, divestment sanctions is a tactic that can be adopted by individuals, companies and governments, meaning we all have the agency to make a difference.

# THE LESSONS OF BOYCOTT

## 1. BOYCOTT TAKES TIME

From the formation of the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) in 1959 to its first significant breakthrough in 1983 when Danish dock workers refused to off-load South African goods, it is crucial to note that the necessary weight of internal and external pressure for Apartheid to collapse took decades to build. Despite popular campaigns since the 1960s, a conjuncture of other factors was required to transform these efforts into a major popular movement in the 1980s.

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*The end of apartheid stands as one of the crowning accomplishments of the past century, but we would not have succeeded without the help of international pressure-- in particular the divestment movement of the 1980s. Over the past six months, a similar movement has taken shape, this time aiming at an end to the Israeli occupation.*

”

Desmond Tutu of South Africa

Palestinians already have a rich history of instigating successful boycott campaigns. The 1936 six-month general strike against the colonial British Mandate was triggered by the discovery of a secret arms shipment for Jewish paramilitary forces. With their fear of being violently dispossessed now confirmed, Arab leaders formally demanded that the British High Commissioner establish a representative government in Palestine, prohibit land sales to Jews, cease Jewish immigration and hold immediate elections. A general strike was then implemented, effectively bringing the Mandates' economy to a halt and forcing the British to call for the Peel Royal Commission. The Commission warned against the implications of the current British policy that encouraged Jewish immigration and proposed in their 1939 White Paper a stricter limitation on Jewish immigration and plans for eventual partition.

## **The Arab League boycott<sup>1</sup>**

### **RISE...**

1948 – the Arab League banned all commercial and financial transactions between Israel and the League states along three main strands:

1. Prohibition of direct trade and relations between Israel and the League members.
2. Boycotting international companies that did business with Israel.
3. Blacklisting firms that traded with companies that conducted business with Israel, or which maintained Israeli capital.

1951: a national boycott office was set up in each country and linked to the headquarters in Damascus. A central blacklist of companies was developed and maintained.

1973- the beginning of the peak of the Arab efforts was the 1973 oil embargo when members of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) proclaimed an oil embargo in response to a U.S. decision to re-supply the Israeli military during the October War. OAPEC declared it would no longer ship oil to the United States and other countries if they supported Israel in the conflict.

1975- Israel was politically isolated by the passing of a resolution, pushed by the Arab League, equating Zionism with racism at the United Nations General Assembly. By 1976, a sharp increase in the impact of the Arab League's boycott could be seen: 2,200 companies in the U.S. reported over 97,000 transactions with boycott conditions or requirements.

### **...AND FALL**

1977 - The decline of Arab boycott efforts begins as the Carter administration determined that engaging in boycott was illegal for American companies unless sanctioned by the United States.

1978 – The Egypt- Israel peace treaty signaled the beginning of a wave of normalization in the Arab world as it enabled Israel to begin importing Egyptian oil. Also in 1978 a bill was passed in Ontario, Canada prohibiting “discrimination in business relationships” effectively undermining the boycott. By the mid 1980s, companies including Toyota and Nestlé, that had previously stayed out of the Israeli market began to invest in Israel.

1991- against the backdrop of the Madrid talks, UN resolution 3379 stating that Zionism is racism, was revoked.

1993- The signing of the Oslo Accords and subsequent Paris Protocols generated immediate normalization with Israel. Israel's GDP grew by 6.8% and exports by 12.6% and six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates) renounced their support of the secondary boycott<sup>(\*)</sup>. Both secondary and tertiary levels<sup>(\*)</sup> of boycott began to disintegrate throughout the region and direct trade with Israel was established in Qatar, Oman and Morocco.

1995- The U.S. Congress passed a bill that barred the sale or lease of U.S. defense articles or services to any country sending letters to U.S. firms requesting compliance with, or soliciting information regarding compliance with, the Arab League primary or secondary boycott of Israel. The Taba declaration to end the boycott of Israel was also signed by Egyptian, American, Jordanian and Palestinian trade leaders calling for “all efforts to end the boycott of Israel.”

2000- The outbreak of the Second Intifada saw a boycott of Israel return to the Arab League agenda. However, despite repeated statements by League members about ending normalizations with Israel and re-implementing the boycott, with the exception of Syria and Lebanon, trade with Israel continued.

Today grassroots movements and individual companies requesting adherence to the boycott on a secondary and tertiary level who keep the boycott and prospects for broader isolation of Israel alive.

(\*) Please refer to page 31 for definition.

## Boycott as Resistance:

### *the example of Beit Sahour in the first Intifada*

Another wave of widespread locally based resistance by Palestinians took place during the First Intifada. One of the most effective uses of boycott as resistance took place in Beit Sahour<sup>2</sup> where residents took control of public affairs. The educational committee, started underground schools when the occupation closed the state schools; the agricultural committee/the Committee of Reducing Dependency on the Occupation gave seeds to Beit Sahour citizens to grow their own vegetables and taught people how to keep rabbits and other small livestock and the tax committee, organised a community refusal to pay taxes to the occupation.

Tactics included the return of military ID cards and the withholding of taxes. As the community stated, *“We will not finance the bullets that kill our children, the growing number of prisons, the expenses of the occupying army. We want no more than what you have: freedom and our own representatives to pay taxes to,”* read part of a statement from the town on October 19, 1989<sup>3</sup>. These efforts made the global headlines, primarily because Israel retaliated with violent reprisals including placing the town under curfew for 42 days, cutting telephone lines and attempting to bar reporters from the town. Occupation forces imprisoned around 40 residents and the Israeli military stopped several consul-generals when they attempted to go to Beit Sahour and investigate the conditions during the tax strike. Furthermore, millions of

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*We will not  
finance the  
bullets that kill  
our children*

”



dollars in cash and property were taken from individuals and businesses who refused to pay taxes or file tax returns. Although in some cases people were asked to only pay one symbolic shekel, they still refused to do so. The property was never returned to their respective owners.

Nevertheless, Beit Sahour managed to boycott every Israeli product on the market. Through the Committee of Reducing Dependency on the Occupation, the whole community participated in setting up systems of self-reliance. For instance, people donated money to purchase cows to start their own dairy produce and others volunteered to distribute the milk amongst the people.

As a result, Beit Sahour was nominated for the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize and received the annual award of the Danish Peace Foundation in 1990. Their resistance continued until 1995 when the Palestinian Authority took over. One of the direct results on the community level was the founding of the Beit Sahour Medical Center that was established through the Medical Committee.

### ***Palestinian BDS, a turning point***

The turning point for the Palestinian BDS campaign came with the Third World Conference Against Racism in Durban South Africa, when representatives from Palestinian and global civil society proposed to combine methods used by the South African liberation movement in its struggle against Apartheid alongside existing methods used in the Palestinian liberation struggle.

The Durban Program of Action included a call for an international anti-Israeli apartheid movement to be launched and asked the international community to *impose a policy of complete and total isolation of Israel as an apartheid state as in the case of South Africa which means the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions and embargoes, the full cessation of all links (diplomatic, economic, social, aid, military cooperation and training) between all states and Israel (article 425).*

Despite these positive steps the challenge of continued Western support for Israel prevails. The U.S. and Israel walked out midway through the first Durban conference and Israel, Canada and the U.S. boycotted the second one that took place in Geneva in April 2009<sup>4</sup>.

“  
*Beit Sahour was nominated for the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize and received the annual award of the Danish Peace Foundation in 1990*  
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## 1.2 THE CHALLENGE OF NORMALIZATION

*“Throughout the 1990s, the easiest way of getting cash between the Mediterranean Sea and Jordan River was to get a Palestinian and an Israeli together (preferably someone with a degree in ‘peace studies,’ whatever that is) to establish a center or institute or organization or group or committee for Palestinian and Israeli, or religious or Middle East or Arab dialogue or democracy, non-violence, cooperation, research, peace, or reconciliation, and the money would roll in.”*

~ Akram Baker, The Daily Star | 31 May 2007

Despite the highly effective local efforts, the BDS movement diminished rapidly in the atmosphere of normalization that accompanied the so-called ‘peace’ process.

### **The Paris Protocol**

Following the creation of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) trade between Israel and the PNA became subject to the regulations of the Paris Protocol from 1994. Far from guaranteeing Palestinians the freedom to import and export, it explicitly restricted the PNA to specific quantities of goods that could be imported and exported and created an economic committee to deal with all economic affairs that essentially gave Israel veto power over PNA requests<sup>5</sup>. In essence, the Paris Protocol did not effect any change in policy from the previous era of direct occupation. Despite repeated PNA efforts to amend the Paris agreement Israel has refused.<sup>6</sup>



### **Oslo: embracing Israel, deceiving Palestine**

After the signing of the Oslo agreements, tens of millions of dollars and euros were invested into joint projects that made no effort to change the political and socioeconomic status quo in the Occupied Territories but rather presented the Israeli Palestinian “conflict” as a problem of ignorance and prejudice as opposed to an issue of injustice and the ongoing dispossession and subjugation of one people by another. Such projects claiming that Palestinians and Israelis are able to interact on equal terms paint a false picture of coexistence<sup>7</sup>.

It was in this context that an emergency meeting was held by the General Assembly of Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO). It focused on ending the increasingly important issue of normalization.

The normalization climate not only enabled Israel to further its integration into global markets, but also ensured the consolidation of its control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip economies. By 2000, it was clear that Israel’s colonization project and its oppression of the Palestinians had increased. Moreover, it resulted in a six-fold increase in direct foreign investment to Israel, from \$686 million to about \$3.6 billion<sup>8</sup> and Israel was embraced by the international community including in the Middle East<sup>9</sup>.

## WHAT IS NORMALIZATION?

*(as agreed upon during the first Palestinian BDS Conference, Ramallah, November 2007)*

*“Normalization means to participate in any project or initiative or activity, local or international, specifically designed for gathering (either directly or indirectly) Palestinians (and / or Arabs) and Israelis whether individuals or institutions; that does not explicitly aim to expose and resist the occupation and all forms of discrimination and oppression against the Palestinian people.”*

Specifically, this encompasses;

- projects that do not agree on inalienable rights for Palestinians under international law and the conditions of justice;
- projects implying equity between Israelis and the Palestinians in the responsibility for the conflict, or that claim that peace is achieved through dialogue and understanding and increased cooperation between both sides, without achieving justice;
- projects that hide the situation of the Palestinian people as victims of the Israeli colonial project, or that present the Zionist narrative;
- projects that refuse, ignore or dilute the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the right of return and compensation according to the UN resolution No. 194;
- projects supported by or in partnership with the Israeli institutions that do not recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people or projects receiving support or funding (in part or in whole) from the Israeli government such as cinema festivals, information technology exhibitions, etc.

It excludes international forums held outside the Arab world and extreme emergency situations related to the preservation of human life, such as the spread of pandemics or natural disasters or environmental cooperation that requires Palestinian – Israeli cooperation.

~adapted from The Boycott National Committee (BNC)

## RESISTING NORMALISATION

### Another voice versus One Voice

On 30 September 2007, an organization named One Voice announced its plans for two big concerts to be held in Tel Aviv and Jericho simultaneously. However, attendance required joining One Voice, and signing a document of acceptance for their formula for ending the 'conflict' called the "Ten Pillars". A prime example of normalization, the document failed to deal with key violations of international law and human rights, including the Right of Return, dismantling Israel's Apartheid Wall and the annexation of Jerusalem. In response, concerned individuals soon mobilized forming a group called 'Another Voice' and organized an alternative event. As Natasha Aruri, a spokesperson for the group stated, "A concert for peace is one thing, and asking people to sign away their basic human rights is another."

When Another Voice's public campaign contacting the artists and sponsors of the planned concerts who in most cases were not aware of the details for the concert. As a result several endorsers pulled their support. The campaign picked up more pace when it gained the support of the Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) who highlighted the problems of normalization and specifically how One Voice's mandate did not demonstrate any commitment to international law; and that by mainstream maintaining the event was sponsored largely by private Israeli institutions and endorsed Israeli political figure, groups who were unquestionably complicit in Israel's occupation and other forms of oppression.

As a result of this coordinated and consolidated action, artists began to pull out. DAM, a Palestinian rap group based in Lod, in 1948 Palestine, pledged attendance instead for the alternative event organized by Another Voice and when the majority of Arab and Palestinian artists canceled, One Voice was forced to cancel the Jericho concert. Finally, upon learning that he was to perform only in Tel Aviv and not in Jericho, **Brian Adams**, the main Western star

of the concert, refused to perform, forcing the cancellation of the Tel Aviv concert as well.

parameters and law; and that by mainstream maintaining



## 2. BOYCOTT AS A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT

*Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa said, «If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.» The UN, EU, Arab League, and the international community by and large have remained silent in the face of atrocities committed by Apartheid Israel. They are therefore on the side of Israel. Hundreds of dead corpses of children and women have failed to convince them to act. This is what every Palestinian knows today -- whether on the streets of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank or refugee camps in the Diaspora<sup>10</sup>.*

~ Professor Haidar Eid, Associate professor of cultural studies Al Aqsa University Gaza, co-founder of the one democratic state group (odsg.org) and steering committee member of Palestinian campaign for Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel PACBI (pacbi.org)

One of the characteristics of the South African anti-apartheid movement was appealing directly to regular people such as workers and teachers as opposed to governments and official bodies. As was the case in South Africa, most governments (with a few notable exceptions)<sup>11</sup> support the Israeli regime. BDS is therefore being built from the ground up and grassroots initiatives are working to pressure official bodies into action.

In August 2002, a call building on the Durban plan of action, was issued by a broad coalition of Palestinian civil society. They called to intensify the global boycott of Israel campaign

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*for the sake of freedom and justice in Palestine and the world... upon the solidarity movement, NGOs, academic and cultural institutions, business companies, political parties and unions, as well as concerned individuals to strengthen and broaden the global Israel Boycott Campaign<sup>12</sup>.*

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## THE WHO'S WHO OF A SUCCESSFUL BDS CAMPAIGN

**Artists:** As early as 1963 for example, forty-five prominent British playwrights instructed their agents to insert a clause in all future contracts refusing performing rights in any theatre “where discrimination is made among audiences on grounds of colour.”<sup>13</sup> This had turned into an almost complete ban on white South African cultural exchange by the 1980s and artists who broke the boycott faced heavy criticism.<sup>14</sup> Cultural sanctions were among the least controversial and easiest to implement.

**Academia:** In 1965, 496 university professors and lecturers from 34 British universities issued a declaration in consultation with the Anti-Apartheid Movement protesting the regime’s racial discrimination and pledging not to apply for or accept academic posts in South African universities which practice racial discrimination.<sup>15</sup>

**Church Groups:** In 1966 the University Christian Movement and the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) initiated the Committee of Conscience Against Apartheid (CCAA) – opposing US bank lending to the South African government. A consumer boycott of the banks began, supported by many church and community groups.<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere, women’s church groups in Germany initiated a consumer boycott of South African produce following the 1977 banning of the Black Women’s Federation. Their famous apple boycott (which involved protests outside supermarkets) spurred the public into boycotting German and Swiss banks that were doing business with the South African regime.<sup>17</sup>

**City Councils:** In 1978 and 1979 respectively, the Californian cities of Davis and Berkley held referendums in which the public voted to divest operating funds in order to contribute to anti-apartheid efforts.

**Workers:** The British Trade Union Congress called on Britain’s 50 leading retailers to remove South African goods from their shelves, while Liverpool Dockers refused to unload apartheid goods causing nine retailers’ to suspend selling South African products by 1985. Elsewhere in Finland, the Finnish Transport Workers’ Union (AKT), imposed a total ban on trade between Finland and South Africa. By allying with unions in other countries they caught companies trying to evade the ban and threatened to boycott all their foreign trade unless they stopped dealing with South Africa<sup>18</sup>.

**Students:** Student disinvestment campaigns began in the 1970s in the United States where numerous teach-ins and demonstrations picketed and interrupted trustee meetings of corporations doing business with South Africa. In the mid 1980s, students demanded their universities “divest”, from companies that traded or had operations in South Africa. The first success was Hampshire College<sup>19</sup>.

## Al Quds University stops normalizing

On February 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, Al-Quds University declared it would cease all forms of academic cooperation with Israeli academic institutions. Their statement noted that, “If the two-state solution is as far away today as it was ten years ago, there is no justification for continued academic cooperation based on reaching that solution.”

According to the University, “Ending academic cooperation is aimed at, first of all, pressuring Israel to abide by a solution that ends the occupation, a solution that has been needed for far too long and that the international community has stopped demanding.” The decision which was a response to the attacks on Gaza was nevertheless made in response to ongoing Israeli policies of colonisation, siege and thwarting of a negotiated peace process that would lead to an independent Palestinian state. Finally, the university board expressed disappointment over the absence of serious protest from Israeli academia, in particular, and civil society organizations, in general, as well as the failure of these organizations to “understand the injustice that Palestinians are suffering from,” calling on local, international and regional academics to support the university’s stance by halting academic cooperation with Israeli institutions.<sup>21</sup>

## CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC BOYCOTT

In October 2003 the Academic boycott of Israel began to take a more cohesive form when Palestinian academics and intellectuals in the Occupied Territories and the diaspora called on their colleagues in the international community to engage in pacifist resistance to the oppression and injustice of Israeli occupation by boycotting Israeli academic institutions.

This was consolidated in April 2004 when the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) was founded by a group of Palestinian academics and intellectuals in Ramallah. Given the compliance (either direct or through their silence) of the Israeli academic sector and intellectuals, to their State’s oppression of the Palestinian people, PACBI calls for a comprehensive and consistent boycott of Israeli academic and cultural institutions until Israel complies with UN resolution to end the occupation and for refugee return.<sup>20</sup> Their call has received wide support in Palestinian Academia and civil society.

BOYCOTT

APARTHEID

ISRAEL

## Ecclesiastical divestment

Christian churches in the U.S., England, Canada, and elsewhere have increasingly begun to call for divestment or boycott of companies profiting from the Israeli occupation. Prominent

actions that have caused alarm among Israel's supporters owing to their strong leadership and potential broad reaching implications include;

- In 2008, the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire passed a resolution in support of divestment from corporations that support and/or profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestine.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2009, the Church of England decided to divest from Caterpillar stocks.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2006 the United Church of Canada's Toronto branch began a boycott of Israeli products and companies doing business with its military.<sup>24</sup>
- The Presbyterian Church of the USA has developed a list of corporations, including Caterpillar, ITT, Motorola, etc. with whom they have entered into dialogue and are encouraging their

churches and membership to invest in West Bank and Gaza companies.<sup>25</sup>

- In 2005, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) opted to adopt a "positive investment" policy to foster peace and cooperation in the region.
- In July 2005, the United Church of Christ (UCC) adopted a compromise "positive investment" and endorsement of divestment (still awaiting implementation).<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, as part of their divestment efforts, the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church released a report about companies profiting from or supporting the occupation whittom they continue to follow up.<sup>27</sup>

Church campaigns are strategically and organically connected to campaigns occurring at other major institutions. In particular, the financial clout of American universities and labor unions could be very significant owing to their vast investment portfolios and may pose a severe economic threat to Israel.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, "Historically ... this community has occupied the corridors of power and wealth in America."<sup>29</sup> It is therefore difficult to accuse them of hostility to human rights or anti-Semitism and their actions hold the promise of enormous impact on the political and cultural scene in the U.S.

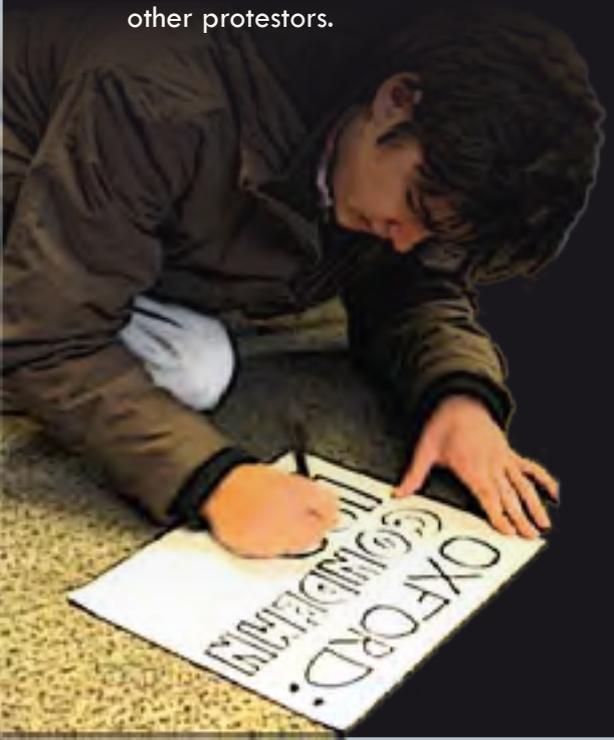


## Student Action

Students have been at the vanguard of international protests against the Gaza massacre. On the evening of Tuesday, 13th January, 2009, a group of students at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) of the University of London occupied a building, igniting a mass of student occupations in solidarity with Gaza.

By the beginning of March, 29 universities had been occupied in solidarity with Gaza. Most of the occupying students have issued similar demands: a statement from their vice-chancellor condemning the Israeli bombing of Gaza, severing university investment or links with companies supplying equipment to the Israeli occupation, approving the sending of surplus computers and books to students in Gaza, and scholarships for Gazan students.

Additionally, numerous student groups called for a university condemnation of the BBC's refusal to air the DEC fundraising for Gaza. This led to the occupation of two BBC buildings - one in Glasgow and one in London by students and other protestors.



### ***Student demands from Universities in the UK and US include;***

- Divestment from companies like Caterpillar, United Technologies, General Electric, ITT Corporation, Motorola, Terex and BAE systems who all provide the Israeli military with equipment;
- Scholarships for Gazan students and sending aid and surplus materials to Gaza;
- On campus boycott of Israeli-owned products including Eden Springs bottled water on UK campuses;
- Investigate university funds in companies contributing to Israeli occupation;
- Host a lecture/debate series about the Palestine.

## SCHOOLS IN GAZA: ACADEMIC BOYCOTT IN PERSPECTIVE

Gaza's education system had already been brought to the breaking point by the crushing siege that limited supplies for schools and opportunities for students. Yet during the assault that began in December 2008, over 37 primary and secondary schools (with 18 others serving as shelters<sup>30</sup>) were hit and there was an all-out assault on the Islamic University of Gaza (IUG). The University taught 20,000 students, some of whom have already seen other promising options eliminated by the Israeli occupation and siege. It will require millions of dollars and supplies to rebuild, most of which are unavailable in Gaza because of the siege.

The Israeli occupation forces claimed that the school's science laboratories were used to create weapons. However, the debris of the science lab buildings merely reveals 74 laboratories used by science and engineering students for research and scientific experimentation<sup>31</sup>. The Israeli claims are also particularly hypocritical given that the weapons their army used to murder over 1,300 Gazans and eliminate homes and schools, were engineered in Israeli (and US) universities.

The Directorate of the Israel Ministry of Defense, is currently funding 55 projects at Tel Aviv University while the the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency of the US Department of Defense is funding a further nine.<sup>32</sup>

## Other civil society efforts

On July 13, 2005, participants at the UN International Civil Society Conference in support of Middle East peace unanimously adopted the Palestinian Call for BDS.<sup>33</sup> This was bolstered by the first BDS conference and the creation of the Boycott National Committee in the same year. The BNC works to strengthen and spread the culture of Boycott as a central form of civil resistance to Israeli occupation and apartheid. In March 2008 the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC) drafted recommendations for to civil society institutions (political parties, labor unions, associations, networks, NGOs) clarifying how to end normalizations and adhere to the boycott.

# 3. CLEAR GOALS BASED ON JUSTICE

In 1955, Apartheid resisters in South Africa deployed volunteers throughout the country to gather information and create a Freedom Charter that was representative of the desires of all the people.<sup>34</sup> Although outlawed by the Apartheid regime, this nevertheless provided the liberation movement with clear goals that had popular, democratic support. It also provided the international community with a clear lead from which to reject<sup>35</sup> the South African government's attempt to create a series of pseudo-states.

Just as black South African dreams of freedom were not bought out by the offer of limited autonomy the Palestinian BDS campaign presents clear goals that address the needs of all Palestinians. These address not just the Israeli occupation, but also Israel's attempts to create Bantustans of Gaza and the West Bank – creating non-contiguous pseudo-states with limited autonomy.

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*I believe that things would change only if Israel receives a strong message that as long as the occupation continues it would not be a legitimate member of the international community, and that until then its academics, doctors and authors would not be welcome. A similar boycott was imposed on South Africa. It took 21 years, but it eventually led to the end of Apartheid.*  
”

Proponent of the boycott, Professor Ilan Pappé, Chair in the Department of History, the University of Exeter, UK<sup>36</sup>



FIGHT APARTHEID  
STOP THE TOUR

### 3.1 STRATEGIC TARGETING: ISRAELI COLONIES

Just as in the South African case, there has been a strategic focus of BDS efforts on Israeli colonies. The most prominent example is the effort to boycott Agrexco, a 50% state owned Israeli company that exports fresh fruit, vegetables and herbs from Israel and its colonies in the West Bank. Agrexco is one of the three largest Israeli companies exporting from Occupied Palestine, accounting for 70% of fresh produce exports. While it claims that 90% of the goods they export are from Israel, it often mislabels their settlement produce as “made in Israel”. Agrexco also operates under the *Carmel, Jaffa and Coral* brand names. Sixty percent of their imports are to Europe and Britain is an especially important market with products purchased by all major British supermarkets<sup>37</sup>.

With the occupation having destroyed the Palestinian economy, thousands of Palestinians have been forced to find work in Carmel Agrexco affiliated packing houses in Israeli colonies. Palestinian workers may receive as little as 30 shekels a day for their labor, receive no sick pay or holiday pay, and have no rights to unionize or enter into contracts. Palestinian children are often employed on these settlements.

#### Campaign Against Agrexco

The campaign began in 2005 when activists blockaded Agrexco’s depot in Middlesex stopping all deliveries for over eight hours and costing the company over £20,000. Further protests occurred during 2006 while those activists who were arrested in 2005 argued that Agrexco is ancillary to war crimes and crimes against humanity including the crime of ‘Apartheid’ under the International Criminal Court Act 2001, an element of English law, and therefore they cannot be charged with ‘Aggravated Trespass,’ as one of the elements of the offence is ‘intent to disrupt a lawful business’. The Judge in the trial rules that Agrexco must provide disclosure of their dealings with the settlements. Agrexco provides a list of settlements that they deal with in the Jordan Valley and elsewhere and the judge rules that there is no case for the defendants to answer.

#### Valentine’s Day flowers protest

In 2007 over 120 activists converged at the depot in protest at the import of Valentine’s Day flowers from Israel and Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories, followed by further protests during the year, in which the Palestinian Flag was hoisted at Agrexco. In parallel to these efforts, in September of that year campaigners from the Brighton-Tubas Solidarity Group entered a packing house in the settlement of Tomer and photographed boxes marked Agrexco, Tesco and ‘Made in Israel’

#### International Day of Action against Agrexco

2008 saw the introduction of different tactics. In February there was an International day of Action against Agrexco - in London and in Belgium at Liege airport carried out by Belgian Activists. Local solidarity groups also carried out high street actions at supermarkets. Several targeted actions were also undertaken.

In August – September there was a campaign against the sale of Medjool dates for Ramadan while in October several tons of rubble dumped at Agrexco Middlesex to symbolize Israeli roadblocks in the West Bank.

The Valentine’s day protest was repeated again in February 2009 and a major investor in Agrexco, Apax Partners, was also picketed.



## Campaign against Lev Leviev

However, the highly comprehensive and economically integrated nature of Israel's colonization project also require tactics that target the broader structures supporting the settlement project, not least its financing. This is exemplified by the campaign led by Adalah-NY<sup>38</sup> against Lev Leviev, the Israeli diamond mogul and real estate baron who finances Israeli colonies in the West Bank. The initiative began on Nov. 13, 2007, with a surprise protest at the gala opening of Leviev's new diamond boutique on Manhattan's fashionable Madison Avenue. It has expanded to different countries and to target Leviev's real estate partner Shaya Boymelgreen. Boymelgreen's company, Green Park, is currently being sued by the village of Bil'in for \$2 million in the Quebec Superior Court for building and selling settlement housing on Bil'in's land in violation of international law.

## Campaign success

Key to the success so far has been the level of coordination and the involvement of Palestinian villages and organizations in the campaign.

- Engaging the press has been a particularly successful tactic: over 100 articles in major press outlets have covered the campaign;
- Hollywood celebrity endorsers have refused Leviev permission to use their names or photos, greatly hindering his marketing strategy;
- Several letters by prominent Palestinian politicians and newspaper articles by British activists in major newspapers (*The Guardian* and *The Independent*) pressured the British government not to rent buildings from Leviev in London.

On 4 March 2009, following a British parliamentary debate and inquiries into the Africa-Israel company's activities in the West Bank, the UK government announced its decision to boycott Leviev over his companies' construction of Israeli colonies.<sup>39</sup>

- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) cut ties with Leviev, after a months-long campaign.
- Oxfam International, and the U.S. charity Carousel of Hope refused donations from, and association with, Leviev after Adalah-NY exposed his human rights violations.
- The Arab League's Boycott Office in Damascus told Gulf News that the League would consider adding both Bin-Khadra's Levant stores, and Leviev's companies, to its boycott list, at a November 2008 meeting.
- Adalah-NY's campaign and its coverage by Arab journalists left him unable to open new stores under his own name in Dubai. Unfortunately, with the help of his local partner, Arif Bin-Khadra, Leviev is still managing to sell his diamonds there which remain prominently displayed in Bin-Khadra's Levant jewelry shops despite assurances by UAE consular officials. Activists there have staged rare protests, started online protest groups and published an open letter from students in Jayyous asking Dubai to boycott Leviev in Dubai's largest newspaper, *The Gulf News*. The villages of Jayyous and Bil'in have written open letters to the Bin-Khadra family asking them to stop their son from working with Leviev,<sup>40</sup>

*"See letter from Jayyous students to Dubai students on next page"*

## **Boycott Settlement Builder Leviev**

**Extracts from the Letter to Dubai from Jayyous Students , 27 May 2008**

....How do we describe to the world what our life is like in occupied Jayyous in Palestine? The sadness in the eyes of our neighbors, whose only farmlands have been confiscated to build a settlement financed by Mr. Lev Leviev; the exhaustion that results when every daily action requires an extraordinary effort and when despair fights for a place on our people's faces, as they carry their bags and babies through checkpoints, passing soldiers and tanks... Every day, we feel more insecure, as curfews prevent pregnant women from giving birth in hospitals, and stop ambulances in their tracks, forcing some families to live with the decaying corpses of their family members for days... We think about the flood of indignities at the checkpoints. All our dreams for the future have been negatively affected and it's becoming too challenging to fulfill them. As students we always dream of preparing for the future, but unfortunately many obstacles, such as curfews, Walls, closures, and unpredictable checkpoints are preventing their realization.

We hope for all students to live in peace, justice, freedom and love. Every Leviev diamond bought in Dubai pays for our oppression and dispossession. Give our proud village the chance to feed itself and grow again -- boycott Mr. Lev Leviev, in Dubai and all over the world.

## **The need for a comprehensive boycott, beyond just settlement produce**

*Was there ever a movement calling for boycotting the bantustans alone in South Africa? Are there calls for boycotting only the Sudanese army and government officials present in Darfur today? Did any of the free-Tibet activists ever call for boycotting only those Chinese products made in Tibet?*

*Forgetting for the moment the fact that it was born out of ethnic cleansing and the destruction of the indigenous Palestinian society, Israel is the state that built and is fully responsible for maintaining the illegal Jewish colonies. Why should anyone punish the settlements and not Israel? ...Despite their noble intentions, people of conscience supporting peace and justice in Palestine who accept this distinction are effectively accommodating Israeli exceptionalism, or Israel's status as a state above the law.*

*~ Omar Bargouthi, Boycott National Committee(BNC)*

Boycotting only settlement products ignores the fact that the state of Israel practices institutionalized racial discrimination against non -Jewish citizens within the so-called democratic State of Israel and continues to ignore international law by denying the right of return of Palestinian refugees, as sanctioned by the UN.

## **Maintaining momentum**

The BDS movement should not stop at boycotting products produced in colonies. This is because many Israeli companies get away with labeling settlement goods "products of Israel" contrary to EU-Israel trade agreements. Only recently have some EU countries begun investigating this practice. Thus despite the international consensus against the settlements focusing solely on this is ineffective until Israel accurately labels its products.



## 4. ECONOMIC ISOLATION WORKS

Echoing the current attitude towards Israel, Western governments were entirely supportive of the South African apartheid regime, and even boycotted the 1962 United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid and accompanying Resolution 1761 that called for a non-binding boycott and sanctions against South Africa.<sup>41</sup> Only when civil society groups started to take action did corporations begin to divest from South Africa, paving the way for government boycotts and sanctions. The timeline of action during the Gaza massacre suggests a similar pattern;

**13 January 2009:** Following a call by opposition parties and general outrage over the Israeli offensive war on Gaza, the Greek government announces that a ship meant to restock Israeli munitions is not welcome<sup>42</sup>. Students at over 29 universities in Britain and the United States demand divestment including the severing of ties with Israeli academia, institutions, and arms companies and calls for scholarships and assistance to Palestinian educational institutions<sup>43</sup>.

**14 January 2009:** Amnesty International - Human rights group calls for global arms embargo on Israel<sup>44</sup>. The European Union and European Commission announce a freeze in upgrading relations with Israel<sup>45</sup>.

**16 January 2009:** Qatar orders closure of Israel's trade office in Doha and gives Israeli officials a week to leave the country. Mauritania also decides to "suspend" trade relations with Israel<sup>46</sup>.

**20 January 2009:** Partially due to ongoing public protests, the Stockholm community council in Sweden announces that the French company, Veolia, which served as operator of the subways in Stockholm County for the past ten years, has lost their future 8-year contract. Israel gave Veolia a \$500 million contract in 2003 to build and maintain a railway through East Jerusalem that connects illegal Israeli colonies in the occupied West Bank<sup>47</sup>.

## The assault on Gaza ends, but the BDS campaign continues:

**1 February 2009:** The Belgium Government decides to end arms export to Israel. In 2007, Israel bought over \$5 million worth of arms and is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest importer of Belgian weapons in the Middle East<sup>48</sup>.

**5 February 2009:** Dockworkers belonging to the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) refuse to offload a ship carrying Israeli goods to South Africa even despite management pressure.<sup>49</sup>

**9 February 2009:** In an unpublished letter, 23 vicars encourage the Church of England to divest.<sup>50</sup>

**12 February 2009:** Hampshire College becomes the first university to divest from companies because of their involvement in the Israeli occupation.

**26 February 2009:** Following student demands, Cardiff University divests all shares from BAE Systems and the aerospace arm of General Electric who manufacture several parts for Israeli military aircrafts<sup>51</sup>.

**2 April 2009:** Following the launch of a joint national campaign by the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, the New York Campaign to Boycott Israel and others, Motorola sold its Government Electronics Department which made several products (such as bomb fuses) that enable Israel to continue its military occupation and human rights abuses against Palestinians.<sup>52</sup>

**13 April 2009:** the Dutch Labor Party seeks sanctions against Israel.<sup>53</sup>

**14 April 2009:** The transportation branch of the French multinational corporation Veolia loses a contract worth 750 million euros in Bordeaux. Veolia has now lost contracts that are worth more than \$7.5 Billion.

*If Gaza today has become the test of our universal morality and our common humanity, the fast-spreading BDS movement around the world has passed the test with flying colors. In fact, worldwide support for BDS against Israel in reaction to its war crimes...has shown that international civil society fully recognizes that Israel must be held accountable before international law and must pay a heavy price for its atrocities and ongoing willful destruction of Palestinian society<sup>54</sup>.*

~The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC) February 2009

## ISRAEL'S DETERIORATING BRAND NAME

The economic boycott is already yielding results. During the week of 26 March 2009, the Israel Manufacturers Association reported that 21% of 90 local exporters who were questioned had felt a drop in demand due to boycotts, mostly from the UK and Scandinavian countries. In February 2009, a report from the Israel Export Institute reported that 10% of 400 polled exporters received order cancellation notices this year because of Israel's assault on Gaza<sup>55</sup>.

In Europe where the Israeli label was once considered lucrative, supermarkets have been re-labeling Israeli goods to appear as if they were made in Cyprus or Spain

in order to make them more attractive to buyers. In Ireland for example, the leading supermarket ALDI re-labeled Israeli grapefruit as a product of Cyprus before passing it on to the public. Upon discovery, ALDI claimed that the mislabeling was a mistake and that it would be corrected. Stores in Sweden have been caught selling Israeli fruit as Spanish or Kenyan.<sup>56</sup> Lidl stores in Malmö and Gothenburg were reported as selling persimmons from Israel, but labeled as Spanish. Ica in Malmö had avocados on display under a "from Kenya" sign. Spokespeople from Ica made a statement that Ica would correct the mislabeling mistake<sup>57</sup>.



## 4.1 THE CHALLENGE OF DEPENDENCY

Since 1967, ensuring Palestinian dependence upon Israel has become a full-fledged Israeli government policy. By the eve of the Oslo accords, the occupied Palestinian territories had become completely dependent upon Israel. Today, trade flows are nearly 85% of Palestine's GDP and around 90% of Palestinian trade is with Israel,<sup>58</sup> while 74.7% percent of imports to the Occupied Palestinian Territories come from Israel.<sup>59</sup> This has been achieved by putting in place policies that make trade with other countries almost impossible. This includes control of all Palestinian ports, land crossings and airports since 1967. This creates not only logistical difficulties but greatly raises costs for Palestinians traders. Many products cannot withstand the transportation delays (e.g. perishable items or pharmaceuticals and medical equipment that requires constant temperatures or a dust-free environment).<sup>60</sup> Thus most Palestinian exporters from the West Bank are forced to rely on Israeli agents to orchestrate their exports.<sup>61</sup>

Nor do the problems stop at accessing external trade points. The checkpoints inside the West Bank, as well as the construction of the Apartheid Wall, have increased the number of obstacles that restrict access to trade routes.<sup>62</sup> The closure regime's most pernicious effect is the level of uncertainty it creates.

In short, occupation policies have shut down trade with other countries and the only other opportunity for trade is producing goods for the Israeli market. According to PalTrade, Palestinian imports from Israel have increased significantly since before the second Intifada and reached 2,307 million US\$ in 2007.

### *Forced economic dependency in Gaza*

Dependence on the Israeli economy is particularly acute in Gaza not least because of the ongoing siege by Israel, and the closure of the Egyptian borders, meaning only Israeli approved goods may enter. Further dependence on the Israeli market has been created by the destruction of agriculture and livestock by Israeli occupation forces in Gaza. It is estimated that almost fifty percent of Gaza's agricultural lands have been destroyed by Israeli acts of aggression while, thirty percent of all arable land in Gaza has been declared a "closed military zone" by Israel.<sup>63</sup>

Sixty percent of Gaza's electricity is directly supplied by Israel.<sup>64</sup> The remainder of the electricity within the Gaza Strip is generated by one solitary Gazan power plant, which is fuelled by Israeli fuel supplies, from the Dor Alon company.<sup>65</sup> Israeli authorities regularly withhold fuel supplies to Gaza, sometimes denying them altogether,<sup>66</sup> rendering up to 25 percent of the population without power.<sup>67</sup>

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Territories come  
from Israel.*

## Extracts of an open letter to a Palestinian mother<sup>68</sup>

**Before** buying the children a sweet, cool ice cream this summer, please consider...

The Strauss Group is the second largest Israeli food and beverage company and is widely touted as one of the great successes of Israeli industry. Strauss produces many products, including ice creams that are sold in many shops in the occupied Palestinian territories.

On its website in the section on “Corporate Responsibility,” the Strauss Group emphasizes its support for the Israeli army...”

### *Strauss Corporate Responsibility*

“Our connection with soldiers goes as far back as the country, and even further... We have adopted the Golani reconnaissance platoon for over 30 years and provide them with an ongoing variety of food products for their training or missions...”

... Israel’s “elite” Golani Brigade has a history of severe human rights abuses... In April 2002, during the intifada, the brigade played a central role in Operation Defensive Shield and the missions preceding it, and Golani’s actions in the Jenin and TulKarm refugee camps led to the elimination of a number of wanted militants... Golani participated in the siege on Yasser Arafat’s Muqata compound in Ramallah, the capture of the Kasabah in Nablus (along with the Paratroops), and in the difficult fighting in Jenin refugee camp... In the... Second Lebanon War, it saw fierce battle with Hezbollah in the villages of Maroun al-Ras and Bint Jbail and suffered 14 casualties between two battalions.”

...The Strauss Group partners in honey production with Kibbutz Yad Mordechai which is located just outside of the Gaza Strip. According to the historian Walid Khalidi’s book “All that Remains,” Yad Mordechai, established in its current location in 1943, has expanded onto the land of the Palestinian village of Hirbiya, which fell to Israel in November, 1948.

*Instead of purchasing the human rights abuses of Strauss, buy a local, Palestinian ice cream.*

### *The Israeli Staruss Group*

“

We have adopted the Golani reconnaissance platoon for over 30 years and provide them with an ongoing variety of food products for their training or missions...

”



# DEFINING BDS: TOWARDS A WORKING FRAMEWORK

“

***Every day that Israel pounds Gaza brings more converts to the BDS cause...Boycott is not a dogma; it is a tactic. The reason the strategy should be tried is practical: in a country so small and trade-dependent, it could actually work.*** ”

Canadian activist and author of international best seller 'The Shock Doctrine' Naomi Klein<sup>69</sup>

Just as the civil society-led boycott of South Africa was instrumental in bringing about the end of the apartheid regime, so a coordinated and planned effort today has the potential to end over 60 years of Israeli violations of Palestinian rights. As both the South African experience and efforts for Palestine suggest, the power of the boycott lies with civil society and individuals through personal and collective actions.

The signs are promising: the actions and policies outlined in this report not only demonstrate solidarity with the Palestinian people at a time when many Western governments appear to have long since abandoned their cause, but also represent an appropriate tactic that has the potential to secure change. In fact, BDS against Israel has deep roots and is already both local and international in its reach, and cultural and economic in its impact. The task at hand is to coordinate efforts and build on this momentum. The global outrage that followed the recent Gaza massacres provides the right context.



## Action policies against Israel's human rights abuses

Term	Definition	Potential impact
<b>Boycott</b>	The act of voluntarily abstaining, as an expression of political protest and a means of applying pressure for change, from using, purchasing, or engaging in business with persons, groups, companies, stores or organizations.	A boycott campaign negatively impacts Israel's economy, providing incentive for the public, companies, and industries to challenge the state's apartheid laws and the occupation of Palestinian territory. The action of boycotting increases exposure of the Palestinian cause in the media, locally and internationally, thereby creating a shift in discourse about the dynamics of the Palestinian struggle. A boycott also psychologically impacts the Israeli public, exposing unacceptable behavior.
<b>Consumer Boycott</b>	<p><b>*Primary Consumer Boycott:</b> A boycott of products and products with components manufactured by the targeted party.</p> <p><b>*Secondary Consumer Boycott:</b> A boycott of companies that engage in business with any primary boycotted party.</p> <p><b>* Tertiary Consumer Boycott:</b> A boycott of companies that engage in business with any primary or secondary boycotted party.</p>	A consumer boycott raises awareness about the consequences of buying Israeli goods and services. By refusing to purchase goods of Israeli origin (with a '729' barcode), customers pressure supermarkets or industries to discontinue ordering stock from Israel. A connection, that money spent by the consumer finances the maintenance of Israeli apartheid and occupation, becomes evident.
<b>Academic Boycott</b>	Academic institutions and academics that refrain from cooperation with subsidizing, funding, collaborating or participating in joint projects with boycotted academic institutions or academics.	An academic boycott undermines the academic contribution to the Israeli regime. Academic institutions refusing to engage with Israel ends cooperation on projects used to create propaganda and weapons for the continuation of Israeli apartheid and occupation. Additionally, a boycott of Israeli academia impacts a portion of society responsible for the education of others.
<b>Cultural Boycott</b>	A refrain from participation in cultural events or any form of cultural cooperation, collaboration or joint projects with boycotted institutions. Artists refrain from performances in, or visits to, the boycotted country.	A cultural boycott encourages refusal of participation with artists and cultural institutions that are active in or compliant with an apartheid society. As cultural collaboration strengthens a country's image on the international stage, exclusion highlights the injustices in Israeli policies towards Palestinians. Utilizing performances, visits, and film screenings as an opportunity to showcase the Palestinian cause, information is able to reach a wider audience.
<b>Sports Boycott</b>	A boycott of sports teams or individuals from the boycotted country.	A sports boycott stops Israel from promoting itself as a 'fair player' through the participation of its sporting teams and individuals in bilateral and international matches. Denying entry to, or boycotting events with, Israeli competitors who are representatives of Israel, demonstrates a rejection of Israeli apartheid.

<b>Divestment</b>	The act of liquidating stock as part of a concerted economic boycott to pressure a company, industry, or government towards a change in policy.	A divestment campaign appeals to individuals and institutions to withdraw funds from Israeli companies in order to curb the profits of Israel's war and apartheid economy. Institutions in which individuals and constituents hold considerable stake and influence (churches, unions, universities, pension funds), serve as sites of strong BDS campaigns. Such campaigns also raise awareness about discrimination, expulsion, and occupation of the Palestinian people and their land.
<b>Sanctions</b>	The act of coercive measures, adopted by a global institution, a local or a regional government or country against another state in order to elicit a change in that state's behavior.	Sanctions are only carried out by governments (local or national), associations (e.g. the EU or NAM), or global agencies (e.g. UN or WTO). The implementation of sanctions against Israel could reinforce the strength and legitimacy of international institutions and aid them to reclaim a commitment to human rights. Individuals or groups are able to demand and monitor sanctions against Israel from global actors. Such demands from the public ensure that states and global institutions are responsive to enforcing international law. Moreover, a strong movement advocating sanctions against Israel stimulates awareness amongst the public and adds an important element of moral pressure to the BDS campaign.
<b>Military Sanctions</b>	A ban on trade of armaments, including partnerships, agreements and joint operations exchanging military information.	Military sanctions target Israeli war criminals, complicit arms dealers and producers of weaponry. Israel is unable to continue war crimes against the Palestinians if industries and governments refuse to replenish military arsenals.
<b>Economic Sanctions</b>	A ban on trade, co-operation, forums, agreements, and joint research projects.	Economic sanctions erode cooperation agreements with Israel, targeting free/preferential trade agreements, joint research, development agreements and projects. Sanctions diminish profits from the apartheid and occupational policies in Israeli economy, thus ensuring that Israel is not rewarded for its crimes with preferential treatments.
<b>Diplomatic Sanctions</b>	The reduction or removal of diplomatic ties, including relations on an official level such as embassies, barring the boycotted country from participation in external forums and meetings between state representatives.	Diplomatic sanctions challenge the legitimacy of a country or their actions. Undermining the inherent confidence for Israel in the international community provides a gateway to allow a more critical approach to policies.

## ***An Interview with Sam Bahour, a Palestinian entrepreneur***

Settlement products are available to the Palestinian consumer because there are no implementation measures to prevent their sales. Similar to actions the PNA takes to monitor and diminish the sale of stolen cars, the market of settlement products to Palestinians should also be prevented, as both are stolen goods. A customs police can take the role of eliminating settlement products in the market, rendering settlement production less profitable. Without economic incentive of production within settlements, the decline of such products and their infrastructure would be more probable.

When policies are relaxed with no measures of enforcement, business will try to profit. The burden is therefore left on the shoulders of the consumer. There should be a legal and political battle to enforce this article, to compliment consumer education and mobilization about the boycott of Israeli products. Governmental institutions and institutions subsidized by the PA should also have a “buy Palestinian products” policy, to strengthen the economy. Such actions, contribute to growing a more self-sustainable Palestinian economy and thus create more jobs for Palestinians.

*~ adapted from an interview with Sam Bahour,  
Ramallah April 2009*

### ***"Buy Palestinian products" policy***

- *strengthens the Palestinian economy*
- *contributes to the susceptibility of the economy*
- *creates more jobs for Palestinians*

# BEYOND BOYCOTT

Boycotting Israeli products cannot be successfully accomplished without a transition to, and promotion of, Palestinian products. Yet without accessible Palestinian alternatives, upholding the initiatives of a boycott is not viable. Moreover, a lack of resources to promote Palestinian goods in the market, combined with the difficulties and delays in delivery that sometimes result in reduced quality, combined with advertising campaigns and promotion techniques for Israeli products in the Occupied Territories encourage a trend among Palestinian consumers to consider an Israeli label as an indication of quality.

Efforts to shed light on products from Israel and their colonies must be done in conjunction with efforts to change unfounded opinions about Palestinian goods. There are several initiatives created for the promotion of local, Palestinian products.

**PalTrade:** is a trade promotion organization with a mandate to promote Palestinian products locally and internationally. It advocates a competitive and enabling business environment and is dedicated to improving trade competitiveness through promotion and capacity building.<sup>70</sup>

**Palestinian Federation of Industries (PFI) and “Watani”** support local producers to upgrade the quality and price of their products and targets the government and institutions to enact policies that will support local production.

**Intajuna** is a three year project aimed at enhancing the Palestinian consumers’ perceptions toward locally produced products. It aims to tackle a number of inherent weaknesses in marketing, points of sales, and local manufacturers.<sup>71</sup>



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## LOCAL INITIATIVES

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza should adopt the tactic of boycott, divestment and sanctions as a collective non-violent means to resist the continued occupation and colonization of their lands. In particular, efforts must focus on reversing the situation of economic dependency that has been created by Israel, through raising awareness of and promoting Palestinian alternatives to Israeli products.

As the main purchasers of household items, Palestinian women have a key role to play in the promotion of the BDS campaign and more outreach should be done to inform and support this group in their purchasing habits. In parallel, the Palestinian sector must be better supported to allow it to produce and effectively market quality alternatives.

An excellent starting point is the adoption of the BNC recommendations for grassroots action:

- To start a wide boycott campaign of “easy to replace” Israeli goods, in order to restore the spirit and culture of boycott and to link it with products that evidence the crimes committed by the Occupation... Such goods include medicine, beverages, mineral water, snacks, dates, cigarettes, frozen foods, dairy products, clothing and cleaning materials, chocolate and ice cream, and paper products, for which alternatives are readily available;
- Refrain from purchasing Israeli construction materials for which alternatives are available, particularly for the reconstruction of Gaza;
- Boycott the Israeli cellular companies;
- Stimulate and encourage business (for individuals or companies) committed to the boycott by encouraging consumers to shop from these businesses only;
- Hold popular conferences on the boycott to consolidate it as a major form of civil resistance.”

~ taken from the Boycott National committee (BNC) pamphlet 2009

## INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

Drawing upon the South African example, the international boycott of Israeli products which is already yielding significant impacts must be expanded and sustained. The success of the South African boycott also highlights how grassroots action by seemingly disparate civil society groups can be harnessed to create a critical mass that influences the private sector and ultimately governments.

## (Endnotes)

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