

BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT & SANCTIONS

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) is a Palestinian-led movement for freedom, justice and equality. BDS upholds the simple principle that Palestinians are entitled to the same rights as the rest of humanity.

Governments fail to hold Israel to account, while corporations and institutions across the world help Israel to oppress Palestinians. Because those in power refuse to act to stop this injustice, Palestinian civil society has called for a global citizens' response of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

BDS is now a vibrant global movement made up of unions, academic associations, churches and grassroots movements across the world. Since its launch in 2005, BDS is having a major impact and is effectively challenging international support for Israeli apartheid and settler-colonialism.

BOYCOTTS involve withdrawing support from Israel's apartheid regime, complicit Israeli sporting, cultural and academic institutions, and from all Israeli and international companies engaged in violations of Palestinian human rights.

DIVESTMENT campaigns urge banks, local councils, churches, pension funds and universities to withdraw investments from the State of Israel and all Israeli and international companies that sustain Israeli apartheid.

SANCTIONS campaigns pressure governments to fulfil their legal obligations to end Israeli apartheid, and not aid or assist its maintenance, by banning business with illegal Israeli settlements, ending military trade and free-trade agreements, as well as suspending Israel's membership in international forums such as UN bodies and FIFA.

FOUNDING

In 2005, Palestinian civil society organisations called for boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) as a form of non-violent pressure on Israel.

The BDS movement was launched by 170 Palestinian unions, refugee networks, women's organisations, professional associations, popular resistance committees and other Palestinian civil society bodies.

Inspired by the South African anti-apartheid movement, the Palestinian BDS call urges nonviolent pressure on Israel until it complies with international law by meeting three demands.

DEMANDS

1. Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall
2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality
3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194

BDS is an inclusive, anti-racist human rights movement that is opposed on principle to all forms of discrimination, including antisemitism and Islamophobia.

CULTURAL BOYCOTT

An extract of an interview with BDS Co-founder Omar Barghout on the Cultural Boycott:

'BDS is a collective Palestinian voice, an absolute majority, asking democratic citizens worldwide to join us, in pressuring city councils, churches, trade unions, companies, and ultimately governments to stop its links of complicity with Israel.

The cultural boycott is a very important part because cultural institutions play a key role in whitewashing or what we call art-washing of Israeli Apartheid and occupation.

It calls for something much more profound than help, Do No Harm. If an international artist comes to Tel Aviv, they are lending their name to a system of apartheid and oppression. That is not art for the sake of art, music for the sake of music, that is complicity.

The cultural boycott targets complicity, not identity. Urging the cancellation of events, activities, agreements, or projects involving the Israeli State, its lobby groups or its cultural institutions. To reject funding and sponsorship from the Israeli government.

No one is calling for suppressing the rights of Israeli artists. If the UK invites an Israeli filmmaker to show her film, with no institutional connection to the state of Israel, the embassy, or lobby groups, there is absolutely nothing in the boycott to prevent this.

Actually, BDS explicitly calls on Israelis to join us. Israelis who abandoned colonial ideology, policies and dehumanization, who recognise our three basic rights under international law; ending the occupation, ending Apartheid, and the right of return for refugees.

Since there is nothing Jewish about occupation, apartheid, ethnic cleansing, the siege of Gaza, and all the crimes committed, then there is nothing inherently anti-Jewish in proposing that this is against humanity and campaigning to end it.

Of course, there is anti-semitism that really bugs our minds, and it is growing every day in the West. B.D.S. was very clear from the beginning that we oppose all forms of racism, including antisemitism. In fact, we don't see Palestine ever being liberated without an international movement for justice and equality winning the war for racial, indigenous, gender, economic and environmental justice, making this world better for everyone. In Ferguson, USA, after the first uprising when Michael Brown was killed, the Palestinians were one of the first to apply solidarity, because we understand oppression.

Since 2014 Israel started to consider B.D.S. a strategic threat. It is a fact that they have invested hundreds of millions of dollars to fight it. So they clearly do see the impact. It is extremely impressive how much the movement has grown in numbers.'

JOIN THE CULTURAL BOYCOTT

The guidelines and FAQ give essential details on the cultural boycott.

They can be found at: www.bdsmovement.net/cultural-boycott

Once you have read these join the cultural boycott and take action:

Bring artists and cultural workers together to discuss the cultural boycott:

Organising a speaker event, debate or a teach-in can be a great way to bring people together to discuss and learn about the cultural boycott. Use the script or monologues from The Revolution's Promise to get the conversation started.

Organise a statement of support from artists in your country or field:

Organising a statement of support for the cultural boycott from hundreds of artists in a particular country or genre/field is a long term and difficult process but can be a very effective way to spread the word about cultural boycott and bring new people on board. Contact us so we can share with you our related experiences and best practices.

Tell people about your support for the cultural boycott:

If you're an artist that supports the cultural boycott, tell the whole world! Share information about the cultural boycott through your social media channels and when you meet others at performances and exhibitions. Share with colleagues that you don't perform or exhibit your work in Israel. Share your public statement with us so we can help to publicize it.

Make sure your local cultural venue is "occupation free":

Mobilise appeals to convince your local cultural venue not to accept Israeli government or lobby funding or host events sponsored by Israel, its lobby or complicit institutions.

Join an international campaign against a big name artist:

PACBI sometimes launches international public campaigns that often convince famous artists not to perform in Tel Aviv, just as conscientious artists boycotted Sun City. Follow PACBI on social media and check back on this page for details of any ongoing public campaigns. Your help in such campaigns would be well appreciated.

Let your favourite artists know about the cultural boycott:

Whoever your favourite artists are, make sure they know about the fact that Palestinian artists are calling for a cultural boycott of Israel. Experience shows that polite, fact-based and logical letters, tweets and messages to artists work best to convince them to heed or endorse the cultural boycott as an effective way to support Palestinian rights.