

Birzeit University Right To Education Campaign *Activism News*

**PALESTINIAN ACADEMICS CALL FOR
INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC BOYCOTT OF
ISRAEL**
*STATEMENT, PALESTINIAN CAMPAIGN FOR THE
ACADEMIC AND CULTURAL BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL
, 7 JULY 2004*

Dear fellow academics, intellectuals and activists:

Please find below a Palestinian call for boycott issued
by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and

Cultural Boycott of Israel. It has the support of nearly sixty of the most prominent academic, cultural, professional, and trade unions and associations in the Occupied West Bank and Gaza, including the Federation of Unions of Palestinian Universities' Professors and Employees and the umbrella organization of Palestinian NGOs in the occupied West Bank, PNGO. It is thus highly representative of the views of major sectors in Palestinian civil society. We urge you to endorse this call and distribute it as widely as possible to academic organizations, educational institutions, and cultural and professional associations.

The Israeli academy has contributed, either directly or indirectly, to maintaining, defending or otherwise

justifying the military occupation and colonization of the West Bank and Gaza, the entrenched system of racial discrimination and segregation against the Palestinian citizens of Israel, which resembles the defunct apartheid system in South Africa, and the denial of the fundamental rights of Palestinian refugees in contravention of international law.

From our perspective, all forms of international intervention have until now failed to force Israel to comply with international law or to end its repression of the Palestinians, which has manifested itself in the brutal suppression of academic freedom, siege, indiscriminate killing -- *just today, Israel murdered professor Khaled Salah, of an-Najah University, and his 16-year-old child in their home in Nablus* --

wanton destruction and the racist colonial wall. And in view of the fact that people of conscience in the international community of scholars and intellectuals have historically shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice, as exemplified in their struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa through diverse forms of boycott, we call upon you, our colleagues in the international community, to comprehensively and consistently boycott all Israeli academic and cultural institutions in the spirit of international solidarity, moral consistency and resistance to oppression.

To Palestinians, it is more urgent now than ever to finally establish a connection between the two formerly mutually exclusive words: "Israel" and "sanctions". Israel should not be treated with the

moral inconsistency that has prevailed so far. It is precisely the automatic exoneration that Israel receives from western governments and some otherwise progressive movements that Palestinians and their conscientious supporters wish to challenge.

We realize that boycott is not popular yet when the target is Israel. We recognize the hesitation in Europe, and more so in the US (albeit for different reasons), in addressing the need to boycott the Israeli academic establishment; but we, Palestinian academics and intellectuals, cannot wait until divine intervention sways public opinion towards supporting a boycott. We need your help and that of international academic networks to actively contribute to the process that could make it happen.

Boycott is clearly among the clearest and least violent tactics in resisting occupation and injustice at an international level. We hope that you can endorse it and find the best, most nuanced and effective means of advocating and implementing it. This would be a highly appreciated and practical contribution to supporting Palestinian academic freedom and, indeed, to resisting injustice and fostering genuine peace in our troubled region.

Sincerely,

Lisa Taraki

**Coordinator, Palestinian Campaign for the Academic
and Cultural Boycott of Israel**

Occupied Palestinian Territories

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Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel

Israel's colonial oppression of the Palestinian people, which is based on Zionist ideology, comprises the following:

Denial of its responsibility for the Nakba - in particular the waves of ethnic cleansing and dispossession that created the Palestinian refugee problem - and therefore refusal to accept the inalienable rights of the refugees and displaced stipulated in and protected by international law;

Military occupation and colonization of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza since 1967, in violation of international law and UN resolutions;

The entrenched system of racial discrimination and segregation against the Palestinian citizens of Israel, which resembles the defunct apartheid system in South Africa.

Suggested Guiding Principles

Since Israeli academic institutions (mostly state controlled) and the vast majority of Israeli intellectuals and academics have either contributed directly to maintaining, defending or otherwise justifying the above forms of oppression, or have been

complicit in them through their silence,

Given that all forms of international intervention have until now failed to force Israel to comply with international law or to end its repression of the Palestinians, which has manifested itself in many forms, including siege, indiscriminate killing, wanton destruction and the racist colonial wall,

In view of the fact that people of conscience in the international community of scholars and intellectuals have historically shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice, as exemplified in their struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa through diverse forms of boycott,

Recognizing that the growing international boycott movement against Israel has expressed the need for a Palestinian frame of reference outlining guiding principles,

In the spirit of international solidarity, moral consistency and resistance to injustice and oppression,

We, Palestinian academics and intellectuals, call upon our colleagues in the international community to comprehensively and consistently boycott all Israeli academic and cultural institutions as a contribution to the struggle to end Israel's occupation, colonization and system of apartheid, by applying the following:

- 1.Refrain from participation in any form of academic and cultural cooperation, collaboration or joint projects with Israeli institutions;**
- 2.Advocate a comprehensive boycott of Israeli institutions at the national and international levels, including suspension of all forms of funding and subsidies to these institutions;**
- 3.Promote divestment and disinvestment from Israel by international academic institutions;**
- 4.Exclude from the above actions against Israeli institutions any conscientious Israeli academics and intellectuals opposed to their state's colonial and**

racist policies;

5. Work toward the condemnation of Israeli policies by pressing for resolutions to be adopted by academic, professional and cultural associations and organizations;

6. Support Palestinian academic and cultural institutions directly without requiring them to partner with Israeli counterparts as an explicit or implicit condition for such support.