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On false accusations of antisemitism: Global Jewish Organizations Affirm the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement

Tuesday 24 July 2018, by [Jewish Organizations](#) (Date first published: 17 July 2018).

As social justice organizations from around the world, we write this letter with growing alarm regarding the targeting of organizations that support Palestinian rights in general and the nonviolent Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, in particular. These attacks too often take the form of cynical and false accusations of antisemitism that dangerously conflate anti-Jewish racism with opposition to Israel's policies and system of occupation and apartheid.

We live in a frightening era, with growing numbers of authoritarian and xenophobic regimes worldwide, foremost among them the Trump administration, allying themselves with Israel's far right government while making common cause with deeply antisemitic and racist white supremacist groups and parties.

From our own histories we are all too aware of the dangers of increasingly fascist and openly racist governments and political parties. The rise in antisemitic discourse and attacks worldwide is part of that broader trend.

At times like this, it is more important than ever to distinguish between the hostility to or prejudice against Jews on the one hand and legitimate critiques of Israeli policies and system of injustice on the other.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which is increasingly being adopted or considered by western governments, is worded in such a way as to be easily adopted or considered by western governments to intentionally equate legitimate criticisms of Israel and advocacy for Palestinian rights with antisemitism, as a means to suppress the former.

This conflation undermines both the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality and the global struggle against antisemitism. It also serves to shield Israel from being held accountable to universal standards of human rights and international law.

We urge our governments, municipalities, universities and other institutions to reject the IHRA definition and instead take effective measures to defeat white supremacist nationalist hate and violence and to end complicity in Israel's human rights violations. Israel does not represent us and cannot speak for us when committing crimes against Palestinians and denying their UN-stipulated rights.

The Nobel Peace Prize-nominated, Palestinian civil society-led BDS movement for Palestinian rights has demonstrated an ongoing proven commitment to fighting antisemitism and all forms of racism and bigotry, consistent with its dedication to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Some of the undersigned organizations support BDS in full, others in part, and others have no formal position on BDS. We all affirm the current call for BDS as a set of tools and tactics that should not be defined as antisemitic.

Signed:

Academia4equality (Israel)

Boycott from Within (Israeli citizens for BDS)

Coalition of Women for Peace (Israel)

Collectif Judéo Arabe et Citoyen pour la Palestine (France)

Dayenu: New Zealand Jews Against Occupation (New Zealand)

Een Ander Joods Geluid (A Different Jewish Voice) (The Netherlands)

Een Andere Joodse Stem – Another Jewish Voice (Flanders, Belgium)

European Jews for a Just Peace

Free Speech on Israel (UK)

Gate48 – critical Israelis in the Netherlands

Independent Jewish Voices (Canada)

Independent Jewish Voices (UK)

International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network

Italian Network of Jews Against the Occupation

Jewish Anti-Fascist Action Berlin (Germany)

Jewish Socialists' Group (UK)

Jewish Voice for Democracy and Justice in Israel/Palestine (Switzerland)

Jewish Voice For Labour (UK)

Jewish Voice for Peace (USA)

Jewish Voice for Peace members in London (UK)

Jews Against Fascism (Australia)

Jews against the Occupation (Australia)

Jews for Justice for Palestinians (UK)

Jews for Palestinian Right of Return (USA)

Jews of Color & Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews in Solidarity w/ Palestine (USA)

Jews Say No! (USA)

JIPF – Judar för Israelisk Palestinsk Fred (Sweden)

Jüdische Stimme für gerechten Frieden im Nahost e.V. (Germany)

Junts, Associació Catalana de Jueus i Palestins (Catalonia, Spain)

Los Otros Judíos (Argentina)

Manchester Jewish Action for Palestine (UK)

Quebrando Muros – Judeus Brasileiros Pela Descolonização da Palestina (Brazil)

Scottish Jews Against Zionism

SEDQ Network- A Global Jewish Network for Justice

South African Jewish Voices for a Just Peace (South Africa)

South African Jews for a Free Palestine (South Africa)

Union des progressistes juifs de Belgique (Saint-Gilles, Belgium)

United Jewish People's Order (Canada)

Union Juive Française pour la Paix (France)

Workman's Circle, Boston (USA)

P.S.

• 17 JULY 2018:

<https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/global-jewish-organizations-affirm-the-boycott-divestment-and-sanctions-movement/>